三国志 32

渭水の決戦

横山光輝

希望コミックス 98

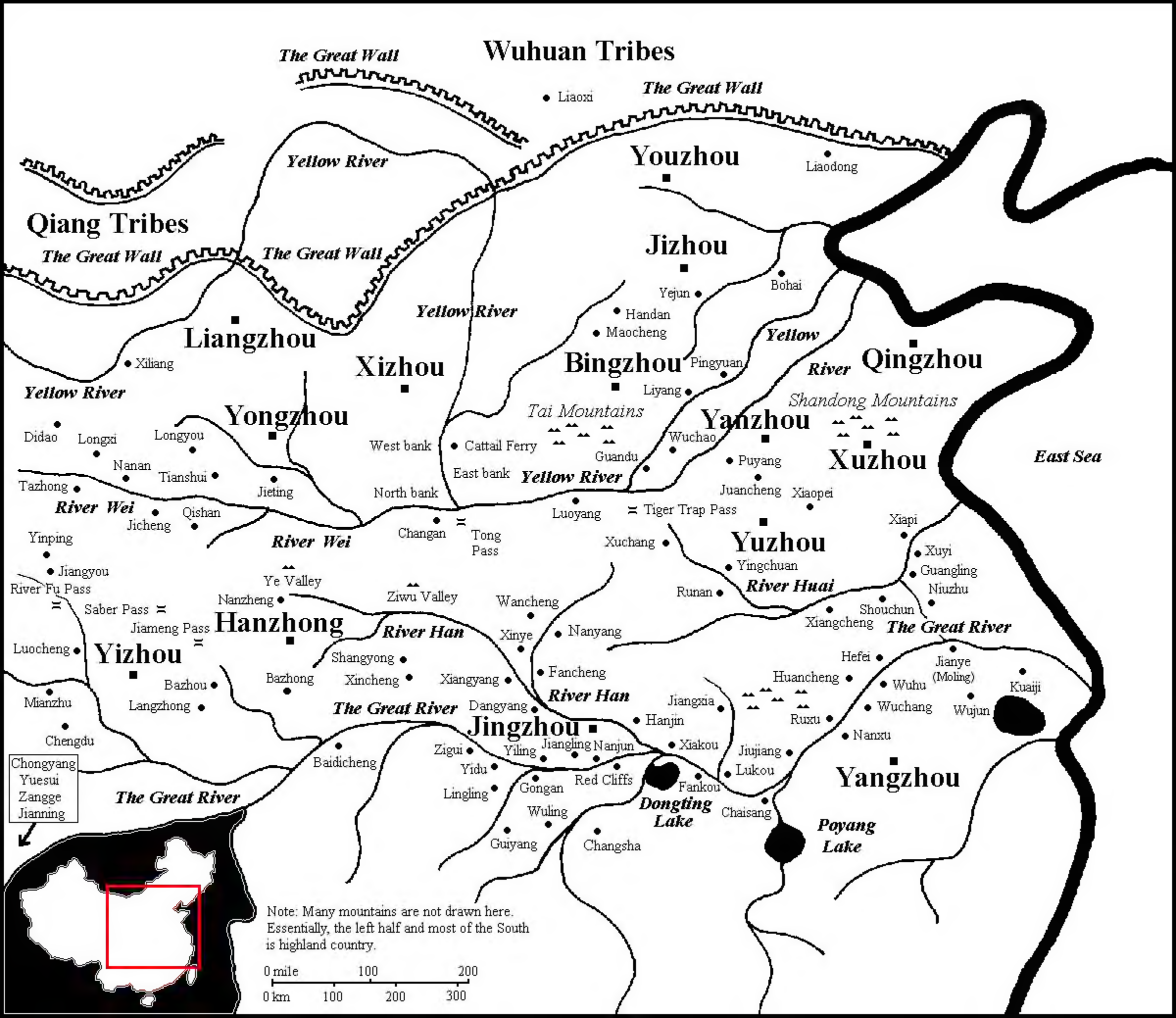
SANGOKUSHI

32

DECISIVE BATTLE ALONG THE WEI RIVER

YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU

MA CHAO MENGQI


Wuhuan Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Liaoxi
Youzhou
Liaodong
Yellow River
Qiang Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Jizhou
Bohai
Yejun
Handan
Maocheng
Yellow River
Liangzhou
Xizhou
Bingzhou
Pingyuan
Yellow River
Qingzhou
Xiliang
Yellow River
Liyang
Shandong Mountains
Tai Mountains
Yongzhou
Yanzhou
Didao
Longxi
Longyou
West bank
Cattail Ferry
Wuchao
Guandu
Xuzhou
East Sea
Nanan
East bank
Yellow River
Puyang
Tianshui
Tazhong
Jieting
North bank
Juancheng
Xiaopei
River Wei
Qishan
Luoyang
Tiger Trap Pass
Jicheng
Changan
Tong Pass
Xiapi
Yuzhou
Yinping
River Wei
Xuchang
Xuyi
Jiangyou
Ye Valley
Yingchuan
Guangling
River Fu Pass
Ziwu Valley
Runan
River Huai
Niuzhu
Saber Pass
Nanzheng
Wancheng
Shouchun
Jiameng Pass
Hanzhong
River Han
Xinye
Nanyang
Xiangcheng
The Great River
Luocheng
Yizhou
Shangyong
Hefei
Jianye (Moling)
Fancheng
Huancheng
Bazhou
Bazhong
Xincheng
Xiangyang
Wuhu
Kuaiji
River Han
Jiangxia
Mianzhu
Langzhong
The Great River
Dangyang
Wuchang
Wujun
Ruxu
Hanjin
Jingzhou
Chengdu
Nanxu
Zigui
Yiling
Jiangling
Nanjun
Xiakou
Jiujiang
Baidicheng
Yidu
Lukou
Yangzhou
Chongyang
Yuesui
Zangge
Jianning
Red Cliffs
Fankou
Gongan
Lingling
Dongting Lake
Chaisang
Wuling
Poyang Lake
Guiyang
Changsha
The Great River
Note: Many mountains are not drawn here.
Essentially, the left half and most of the South
is highland country.
0 mile 100 200
0 km 100 200 300

SANGOKUSHI'S CAST OF CHARACTERS

PART 1: CHARACTERS TO KEEP IN MIND

CAO CAO MENGDE:
THE AMBITIOUS AND MACHIAVELLIAN HERO OF SANGOKUSHI. HAVING BECOME THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, HE HAS RELEGATED EMPEROR XIAN AS A MERE PUPPET RULER.

CHEN DENG:
THE SON OF CHEN GUI AND FORMERLY TAO QIAN OF XUZHOU'S SUBORDINATE. HE AND HIS FATHER SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL.

CHEN GUI:
FATHER OF CHEN DENG WHO SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL. DESPITE SECRETLY WORKING TOGETHER WITH LIU BEI AGAINST CAO CAO, CAO CAO SPARES HIS LIFE AND ALLOWS HIM TO CONTINUE LIVING IN XUZHOU.

CHENG GONG:
A CITY GUARD CAPTAIN WHO ARRESTED CAO CAO, ONLY TO FREE AND ESCAPE WITH HIM AFTER SYMPATHIZING WITH HIS STORY. HOWEVER, HE LATER DEFECTS TO LU BU AND SERVES AS HIS ADVISOR. IN VOLUME 14, HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH LU BU.

EMPRESS HE:
ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HER BEAUTY WAS NOTICED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS WHO THEN PRESENTED HER TO EMPEROR LING. SHE SOON BECAME EMPEROR LING'S FAVOURITE CONSORT AND GAVE BIRTH TO PRINCE LIU BIAN. HOWEVER, SHE AND HER SON WERE REMOVED FROM POWER AND KILLED BY DONG ZHUO WHEN HE CAME TO POWER.

DIAN WEI:
CAO CAO'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD, RENOWNED FOR HIS STRENGTH. HE IS ALSO KNOWN BY THE NICKNAME, "E LAI," IN REFERENCE TO THE MIGHTY GENERAL OF THE SAME NAME WHO SERVED UNDER KING ZHOU OF SHANG. IN VOLUME 12, HE WAS KILLED DURING ZHANG XIU'S PLOT TO KILL CAO CAO.

DIAO CHAN:
A SLAVE GIRL OF WANG YUN, WHO RAISED HER AS HIS OWN DAUGHTER. SHE AND WANG YUN PLOTTED TO DISTANCE LU BU FROM DONG ZHUO BY HAVING HER SEDUCE BOTH MEN. IN VOLUME 8, SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE AFTER ACCOMPLISHING HER GOAL.

DONG CHENG:
ELDER STATESMAN OF HAN WHO IS EMPEROR XIAN'S CONFIDANT. EMPEROR XIAN SECRETELY ASKS HIM TO ELIMINATE CAO CAO, WHO NOW RULES THE IMPERIAL COURT AS CHANCELLOR. IN VOLUME 17, HE IS EXECUTED AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION PLOT IS FOUND OUT BY CAO CAO.

DONG ZHUO:
GOVERNOR OF LIANGZHOU WHO LATER SEIZED CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND SEATED HIMSELF AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, BECOMING AN INFAMOUS TYRANT. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, LU BU.

GAN NING:
FORMER-PIRATE WHO IS NOW A FIRECE GENERAL OF WU.

GONGSUN ZAN:
GOVERNOR OF BEIPING AND FRIEND TO LIU BEI. HE WAGES WAR AGAINST YUAN SHAO AFTER THE LATTER TRICKS HIM AND KILLS HIS YOUNG BROTHER. IN VOLUME 15, YUAN SHAO'S ARMY CONQUERS BEIPING, CAUSING GONGSUN ZAN TO COMMIT SUICIDE.

GUAN YU YUNCHANG:
SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER TO LIU BEI AND SWORN OLDER BROTHER TO ZHANG FEI. HE IS AS FIERCE AS GUAN YU BUT IS MORE RESTRAINED AND CALM IN HIS MANNERISMS.

GUAN PING:
GUAN YU'S ADOPTED SON WHO FIRST APPEARS IN VOLUME 19.

GUO JIA:
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO CAO CAO. HE DIES FROM ILLNESS DURING CAO CAO'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE YUAN FAMILY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).

HUANG ZHONG:
AN ELDERLY WARRIOR GENERAL RENOWNED ESPECIALLY FOR HIS SKILL WITH THE BOW. FORMERLY SERVED LIU BIAO AND HAN XUAN BUT SINCE THE END OF V28, HE NOW SERVES LIU BEI.

JIA XU:
THE SHREWD STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO ZHANG XIU. HE AND ZHANG XIU PLOTS A FAILED ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON CAO CAO, BUT SUCCEEDS IN KILLING DIAN WEI. IN VOLUME 16, HE AND ZHANG XIU DEFECT TO CAO CAO'S SIDE.

LI RU:
CUNNING ADVISOR TO DONG ZHUO. WITH HIS ADVICE, DONG ZHUO FIRMLY SECURES HIS SEAT AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED ALONG WITH DONG ZHUO WHEN LU BU REBELS.

LIU BEI XUANDE:
THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF SANGOKUSHI. A KIND AND VIRTUOUS MAN, SAID TO BE THE DESCENDANT OF EMPEROR JING OF HAN. HE HAS SWORN AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD WITH GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI.

LIU BIAO:
THE GOVERNOR OF JINGZHOU. HE PASSES AWAY DUE TO SICKNESS IN VOLUME 22.

LIU XIE (EMPEROR XIAN OF HAN):
FORMERLY KNOWN AS PRINCE OF CHENLIU, HE IS THE CURRENT EMPEROR OF HAN, THOUGH CAO CAO HAS SEIZED ALL REAL POWER AWAY FROM HIM.

LU BU:
HE IS SAID TO BE THE STRONGEST WARRIOR WITH THE FASTEST HORSE, THE RED HARE. IN VOLUME 14, HE WAS BETRAYED BY HIS SUBORDINATES, AND EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.

LU SU:
MILITARY GENERAL AND ADVISOR OF WU.

MA TENG:
GOVERNOR OF XILIANG AND FATHER OF MA CHAO. UNLIKE THE ACTUAL HISTORICAL FIGURE, HE IS DEPICTED AS A HAN LOYALIST WHO SIGNS DONG CHENG'S BLOOD SEAL PLEDGE.

PANG TONG SHIYUAN:
NICKNAMED THE YOUNG PHOENIX (FENGCHU), HE IS A MASTERFUL STRATEGIST WHO STUDIED UNDER SHUI JING, ALONG WITH ZHUGE LIANG AND XU SHU. HE CURRENTLY SERVES NO LORD BUT ASSISTS WU IN THE BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS.

SHUI JING:
HIS REAL NAME IS SIMA HUI BUT HE IS MORE COMMONLY KNOWN BY HIS TAOIST NAME, SHUI JING (MEANING WATER MIRROR). HE IS THE TEACHER OF ZHUGE LIANG, PANG TONG, AND XU SHU.

SUN CE:
ELDEST SON OF SUN JIAN. IN VOLUME 19, ASSASSINS MAKE A FAILED ATTEMPT AT HIS LIFE. HIS MENTAL HEALTH SOON DETERIORATES DUE TO THE INCIDENT WITH YU JI AND HE SUCCUMBS TO DEATH.

SUN JIAN:
BORN IN WU COMMANDERY, HE WAS THE GOVERNOR OF CHANGSHA. HE PARTICIPATES IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO. BUT IS FINDING OF THE IMPERIAL SEAL CAUSES LIU BIAO AND YUAN SHAO TO TURN ON HIM. IN VOLUME 7, HE TRIES TO EXACT HIS REVENGE ON LIU BIAO, ONLY TO BE KILLED IN BATTLE.

SUN QUAN:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF SUN CE AND THE CURRENT RULER OF WU, A REGION IN SOUTHERN CHINA.

TAISHI CI:
GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED LIU YAO BUT DEFECTED TO SUN CE IN VOLUME 11. DURING THE BATTLE OF HEFEI (VOL. 29), HE FALLS PREY TO ZHANG LIAO'S PLAN AND IS KILLED IN BATTLE.

TAO QIAN:
THE KIND GOVERNOR OF XUZHOU WHO ACCIDENTALLY INVOKES CAO CAO'S WRATH WHEN HIS DISLOYAL SUBORDINATE ZHANG KAI KILLS CAO CAO'S FATHER, CAO SONG.

THE TEN ATTENDANTS:
A CORRUPT GROUP OF 10 EUNUCHS WHO WERE THE HIGHEST RANKING MINISTERS OF THE IMPERIAL COURT. THEY SUCCEEDED IN ASSASSINATING GENERAL HE JIN BUT WERE LATER KILLED BY HE JIN'S ARMY LED BY YUAN SHAO.

WANG YUN:
THE MINISTER OF THE MASSES, ONE OF THE 3 HIGHEST RANKING POSTS IN THE IMPERIAL COURT. HE SUCCESSFULLY PLOTS DONG ZHUO'S DOWNFALL USING DIAO CHANG IN VOLUME 8. HOWEVER, HE IS LATER KILLED BY REMNANTS OF DONG ZHUO'S ARMY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).

WEI YAN:
GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED LIU BIAO AND HAN XUAN ALONG WITH HUANG ZHONG BUT SINCE THE END OF V28, HE NOW SERVES LIU BEI.

WEN CHOU:
HE AND YANG LIANG ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 18, HE IS AMBUSHED BY CAO CAO'S ARMY AND KILLED BY GUAN YU.

XIAHOU DUN:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. HE LOST HIS LEFT EYE DURING A BATTLE AGAINST LU BU'S ARMY IN VOLUME 13.

XU CHU:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HE WAS RECRUITED BY CAO CAO WHO WAS IMPRESSED AFTER SEEING XU CHU'S DUEL WITH DIAN WEI.

XU SHU (SHAN FU):
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST WHO STUDIED UNDER SHUI JING. AFTER A BRIEF STINT OF SERVING LIU BEI, HE IS TRICKED INTO COMING TO XUCHANG AND SERVING CAO CAO (VOLUME 21).

XUN YU:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S MOST TALENTED ADVISORS.

YAN LIANG:
HE AND WEN CHOU ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 17, HE WAS KILLED BY GUAN YU WHILE FIGHTING CAO CAO'S ARMY AT BAIMA.

YI JI:
AN ADVISOR TO LIU BIAO WHO WARNS LIU BEI ABOUT CAI MAO'S PLOT TO ASSASSINATE LIU BEI IN VOLUME 20.

YUAN SHAO:
OLDER BROTHER OF YUAN SHU AND THE GOVERNOR OF JIZHOU. AFTER MANY YEARS OF WARRING AGAINST CAO CAO FOR CONTROL OF NORTHERN CHINA, HE AND HIS FAMILY IS DEFEATED AND KILLED.

YUAN SHU:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF YUAN SHAO AND THE GOVERNOR OF NANYANG. AFTER RECEIVING THE IMPERIAL SEAL FROM SUN CE, HE DECLARES HIMSELF AS THE EMPEROR OF ZHONG DYNASTY. IN VOLUME 15, HE DIES OF THIRST AFTER BEING ON THE RUN FROM LIU BEI AND CAO CAO'S ARMIES.

ZHANG FEI YIDE:
A FIRECE, SHORT-TEMPERED WARRIOR WHO IS THE SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER OF LIU BEI AND GUAN YU.

ZHANG LIAO:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S TOP GENERALS. HE WAS FORMERLY LU BU'S SUBORDINATE BUT DEFECTED TO CAO CAO AFTER THE FORMER'S EXECUTION.

ZHANG XIU:
LORD OF WANCHENG WHO ATTEMPTED TO KILL CAO CAO DURING THE BATTLE OF WANCHENG IN VOLUME 12. AFTER YEARS OF CONFLICT AGAINST CAO CAO, HE FINALLY DECIDES TO DEFECT TO CAO CAO IN VOLUME 16.

ZHAO YUN ZILONG:
A FORMER RETAINER TO YUAN SHAO WHO LATER DEFECTED TO SERVE GONGSUN ZAN. AFTER GONGSUN ZAN'S DEATH, HE LATER MEETS UP WITH LIU BEI AND FINALLY BECOMES HIS RETAINER.

ZHOU CANG:
FORMERLY A YELLOW TURBAN, HE MEETS GUAN YU IN VOLUME 18 AND BECOMES HIS SUBORDINATE.

ZHOU YU GONGJIN:
SWORN BROTHER OF SUN CE, HE IS A SKILLED ADMIRAL WHO SERVES AS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FOR WU'S ARMY. CONVINCED THAT HIS ALLY KONGMING IS TOO MUCH OF A THREAT, HE CURRENTLY SCHEMES FOR HIS DEATH.

ZHUGE LIANG KONGMING:
MASTERFUL STRATEGIST AND FORMER STUDENT OF SHUI JING. IN VOLUME 21, HE YIELDS TO LIU BEI'S PERSISTENCE AND DECIDES TO BECOME HIS SUBJECT.

SANGOKUSHI'S CAST OF CHARACTERS
PART 2: OTHER MINOR CHARACTERS

CAI MAO:
FORMER GENERAL OF LIU BIAO, WHO BECAME THE SUPREME ADMIRAL OF WEI'S NAVY WHEN JINGZHOU SURRENDERED TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 25, HE IS FRAMED BY ZHOU YU'S PLOT AND THUS EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.

CAO REN:
GENERAL SERVING UNDER CAO CAO.

CAO HONG:
GENERAL AND COUSIN TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 6, HE SAVES CAO CAO FROM CERTAIN DEATH.

CAO SONG:
CAO CAO'S FATHER AND A FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED BY TAO QIAN'S ESCORT AND FORMER YELLOW TURBAN, ZHANG KAI.

DING YUAN:
GOVERNOR OF BINGZHOU AND LU BU'S FOSTER-FATHER. HE OBJECTED TO DONG ZHUO'S SCHEME TO PLACE PRINCE CHENLIU AS THE EMPEROR OF HAN, EARNING DONG ZHUO'S WRATH. IN VOLUME 4, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS FOSTER-SON, LU BU, WHO THEN DEFECTS TO SERVE DONG ZHUO.

EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG:
MOTHER TO THE FORMER EMPEROR LING AND GRANDMOTHER TO EMPEROR XIAN. IN VOLUME 3, EMPRESS HE ORDERS FOR HER DEATH TO SECURE HER SON LIU BIAN'S THRONE AS THE NEXT EMPEROR OF HAN.

GAO SHUN:
ONE OF LU BU'S TRUSTED GENERALS. HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH HIS LORD IN VOLUME 14.

GUO SI:
A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND LI JUE TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED UNTIL THE EMPEROR RUNS TO CAO CAO FOR PROTECTION.

HUANG GAI:
LOYAL GENERAL OF WU, WHOSE FAMILY HAS SERVED THE SUN FAMILY FOR THREE GENERATIONS.

HE JIN:
OLDER BROTHER OF EMPRESS HE. ORIGINALLY A SIMPLE BUTCHER, HE BECAME A GENERAL WHEN HIS YOUNGER SISTER BECAME EMPEROR LING'S CONSORT. IN VOLUME 3, HE ATTEMPTS TO ELIMINATE THE TEN ATTENDANTS, ONLY TO BE DISSUADED FROM DOING SO BY HIS YOUNGER SISTER. HE IS LATER KILLED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

HOU CHENG:
ONE OF LU BU'S GENERALS. IN VOLUME 14, HE, ALONG WITH GENERALS WEI XU AND SONG XIAN, BETRAYS LU BU AND DEFECTS TO CAO CAO'S SIDE.

HUA XIONG:
FAMED GENERAL SERVING UNDER DONG ZHUO. IN VOLUME 5, HE DEFEATS SUN JIAN'S ARMY BUT IS LATER KILLED BY GUAN YU.

JI PING:
IMPERIAL PHYSICIAN OF HAN WHO, WITH DONG CHENG, PLOTS TO POISON CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 17, CAO CAO DISCOVERS THEIR PLOT AND EXECUTES HIM.

JIANG GAN:
CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF ZHOU YU AND NOW AN ADVISOR TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 25, HE FAILS TO PERSUADE ZHOU YU TO DEFECT TO CAO CAO, AND INADVERTANTLY HELPS ZHOU YU'S PLOT TO FRAME CAI MAO.

JIANG QIN:
GENERAL OF WU. FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH ZHOU TAI, BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR SUN CE'S FATHER, SUN JIAN.

LADY FUYOU:
FICTIONAL CHARACTER CREATED BY MITSUTERU YOKOYAMA AND LIU BEI'S FIRST LOVE. ZHANG FEI FORMERLY SERVED HER FAMILY, WHO WERE MASSCRED BY THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELS.

LADY MI:
LIU BEI'S FIRST WIFE.

LADY SUN:
SUN QUAN'S YOUNGER SISTER AND LIU BEI'S WIFE AS OF VOLUME 29. SHE IS QUITE FOND OF WEAPONS AND MARTIAL ARTS TO THE POINT THAT SHE HAS HER ATTENDANT LADIES DRESSED IN FULL ARMOUR. HER REAL NAME IS NOT KNOWN BUT SHE IS ALSO KNOWN AS SUN REN, SUN RENXIAN, SUN SHANGXIAN, AND SUN AN.

LI JUE:
A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND GUO SI TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED UNTIL THE EMPEROR RUNS TO CAO CAO FOR PROTECTION.

LI DIAN:
SCHOLARLY GENERAL UNDER THE SERVICE OF CAO CAO.

LIU BIAN:
THE SON OF EMPRESS HE AND BRIEFLY THE EMPEROR OF HAN AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, EMPEROR LING. IN VOLUME 4, HE WAS DEPOSED BY DONG ZHUO AND LATER KILLED ALONG WITH HIS MOTHER BY LI RU.

LIU FENG:
LIU BEI'S ADOPTED SON. ORIGINALLY THE NEPHEW OF LIU MI, HE WAS ADOPTED BY LIU BEI WHO TOOK A LIKING TO HIM IN VOLUME 21.

LU ZHI:
LIU BEI'S FORMER TEACHER AND THE PALACE COMMANDER WHO WAS PLACED IN CHARGE OF LEADING THE HAN ARMY AGAINST THE YELLOW TURBANS. HE WAS LATER DEMOTED FOR FAILING TO BRIBE ONE OF THE IMPERIAL MESSENGERS.

LIU QI:
ELDEST SON OF LIU BIAO AND THE OLDER BROTHER OF LIU CONG.

MA LIANG:
ONE OF LIU BEI'S ADVISORS. FOURTH YOUNGEST OF THE FIVE MA BROTHERS, AND IS NOTED FOR HIS INTELLECT AND WHITE EYEBROWS.

MI ZHU:
ONE OF LIU BEI'S ADVISORS.

SUN QIAN:
ADVISOR/EMISSARY SERVING LIU BEI. (HIS ROLE IS MUCH SMALLER IN SANGOKUSHI COMPARED TO THE ORIGINAL NOVEL.)

YU JIN:
GENERAL SERVING CAO CAO. (IN RECORDS OF THE THRE KINGDOMS, WRITTEN BY CHEN SHOU, YU JIN IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE FIVE TOP GENERALS FOR WEI.)

ZHANG BAO:
ZHANG JIAO'S YOUNGER BROTHER AND THE YELLOW TURBAN'S GENERAL OF THE LAND. HE WAS KILLED BY LIU BEI IN VOLUME 2.

ZHANG JIAO:
LEADER OF THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION. HE PASSED AWAY DUE TO ILLNESS IN VOLUME 3.

ZHANG ZHAO/ZHANG HONG:
THE TWO GENIUSES OF JIANGDONG, ALSO KNOWN AS THE "TWO ZHANGS." AFTER SUN CE'S ADMANT INSISTENCE, THEY DECIDE TO SERVE HIM AND HELP HIS CAMPAIGN TO CONQUER JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG.

ZHOU TAI:
GENERAL OF WU. FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH JIANG QIN BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN.

ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS (SANGOKUSHI)

三国志

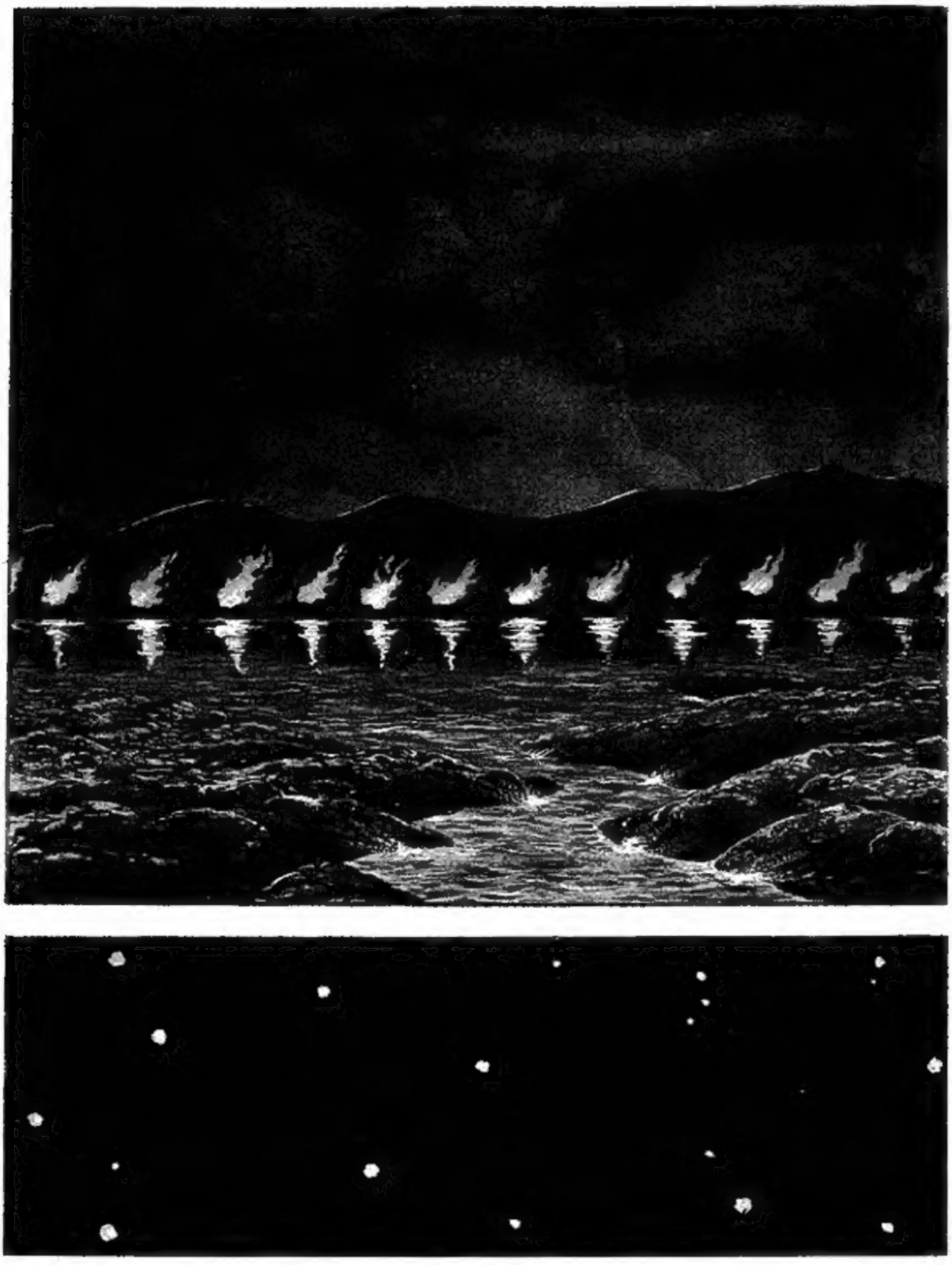
VOLUME 32
DECISIVE BATTLE ALONG THE WEI RIVER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEW WRITINGS OF MENGDE 187
DAOIST STATE HANZHONG 165
ESTRANGEMENT 153
CHALLENGE TO A DUEL 139
100 BEATINGS 104
SHU 74
MA CHAO FLEES 61
RECONCILE 33
A FORTRESS OVERNIGHT 7

（月刊「コミックトム」掲載）

A FORTRESS OVERNIGHT



DAMN. I KNEW IT WAS COLD BUT IT'S SNOWING ALREADY?

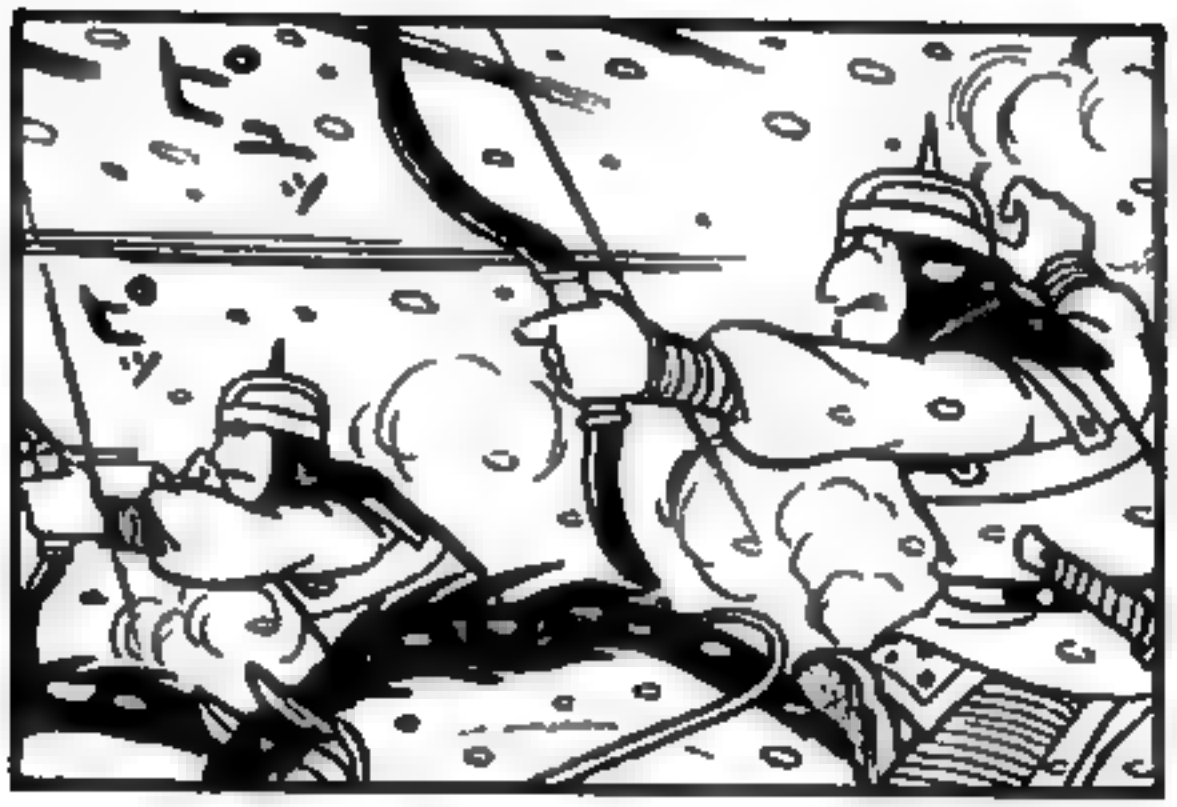
HM?

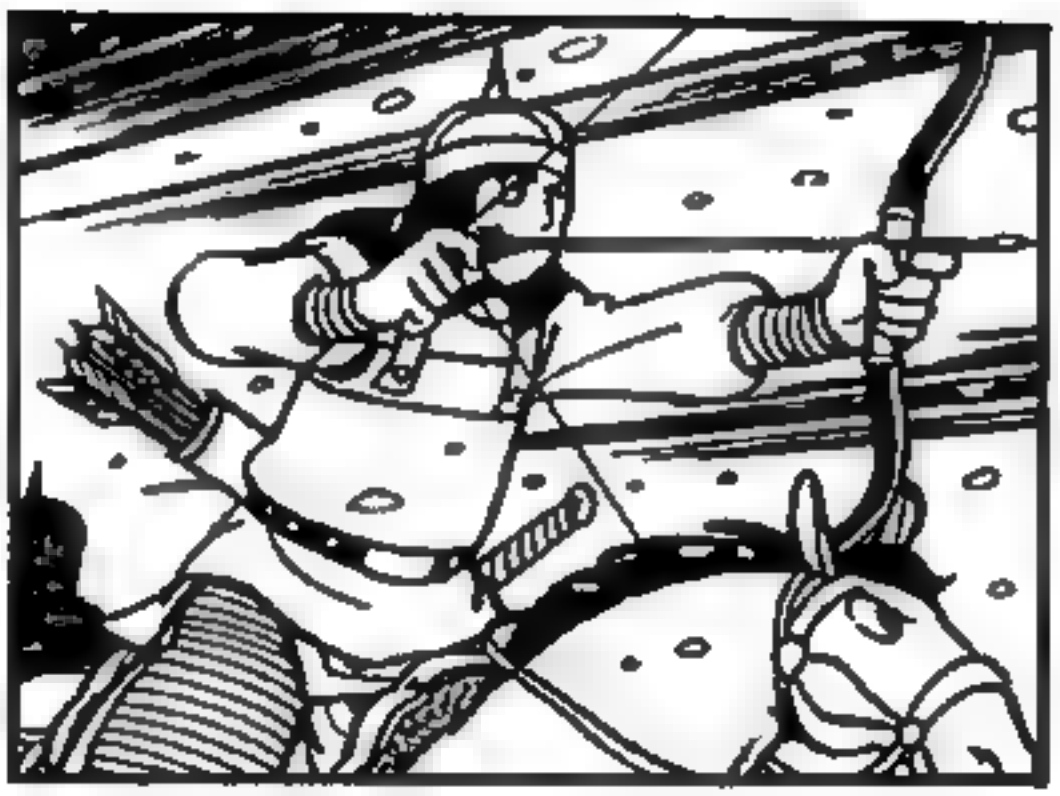
THOSE QIANG PEOPLE OF XILIANG MIGHT BE USED TO THIS WEATHER BUT I SURE AIN'T.
MAN, ARE WE GONNA BE SPENDING THE WHOLE WINTER HERE LIKE THIS?

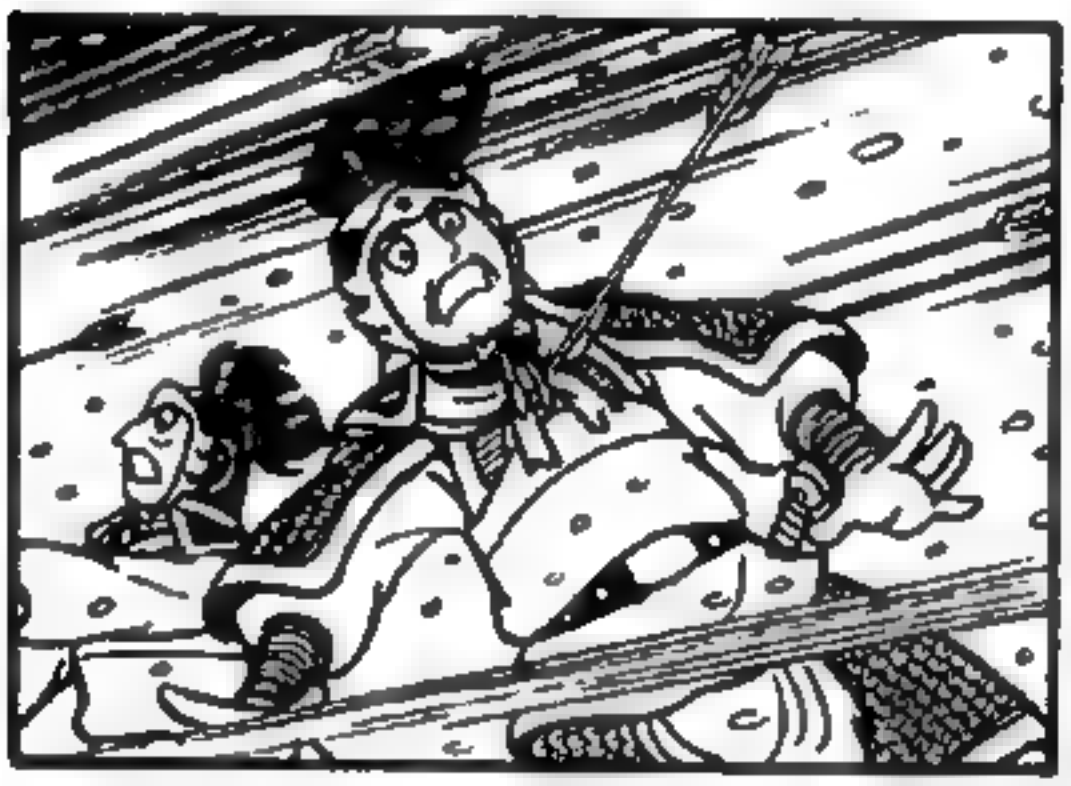
HM?

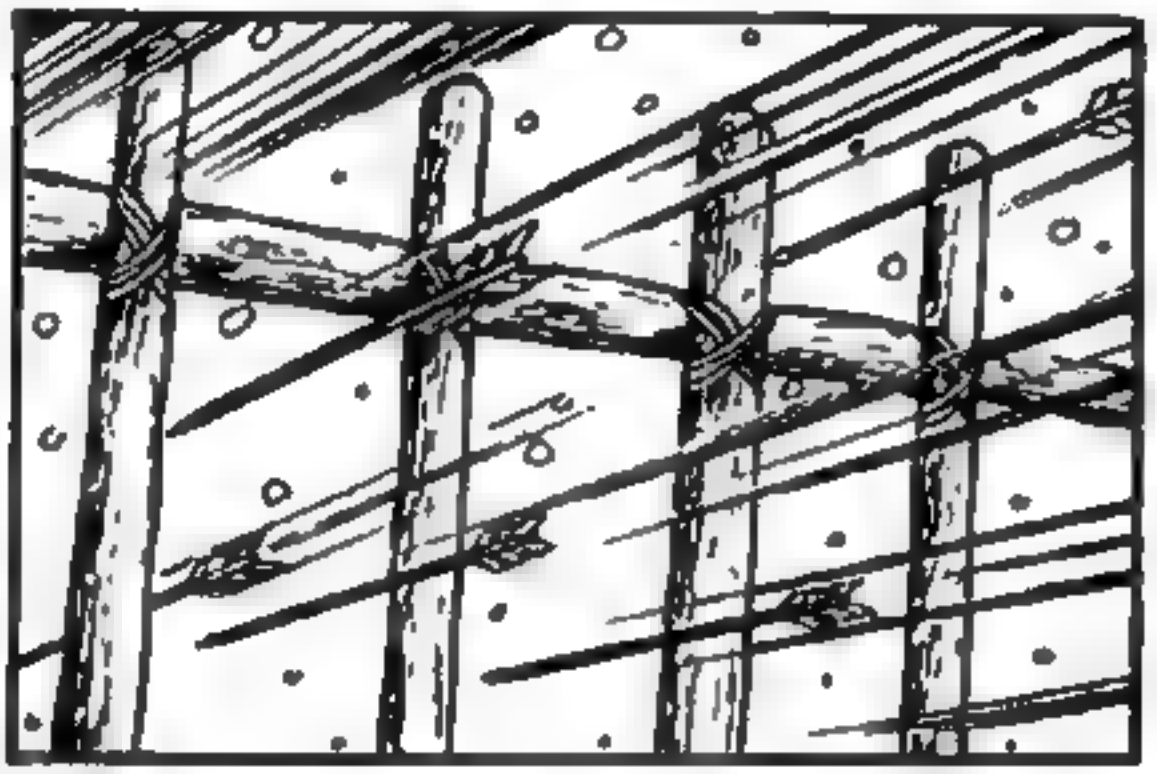
UGH, AGAIN?

ENEMY RAID!

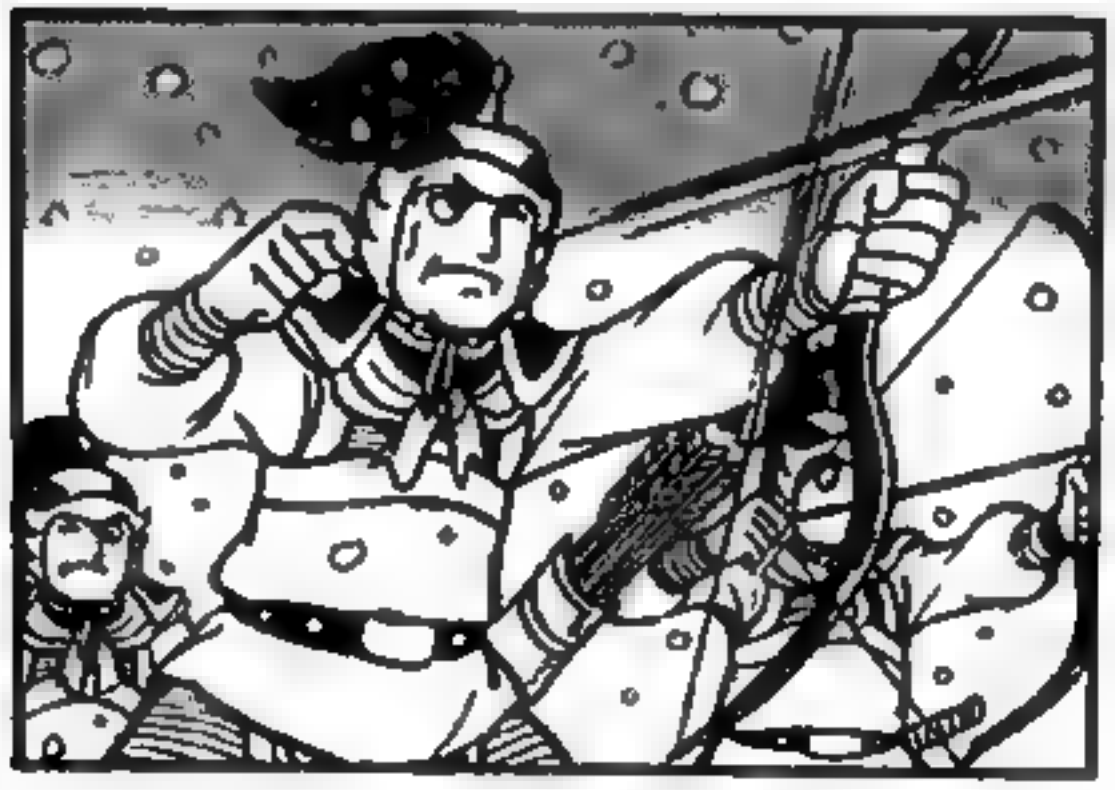


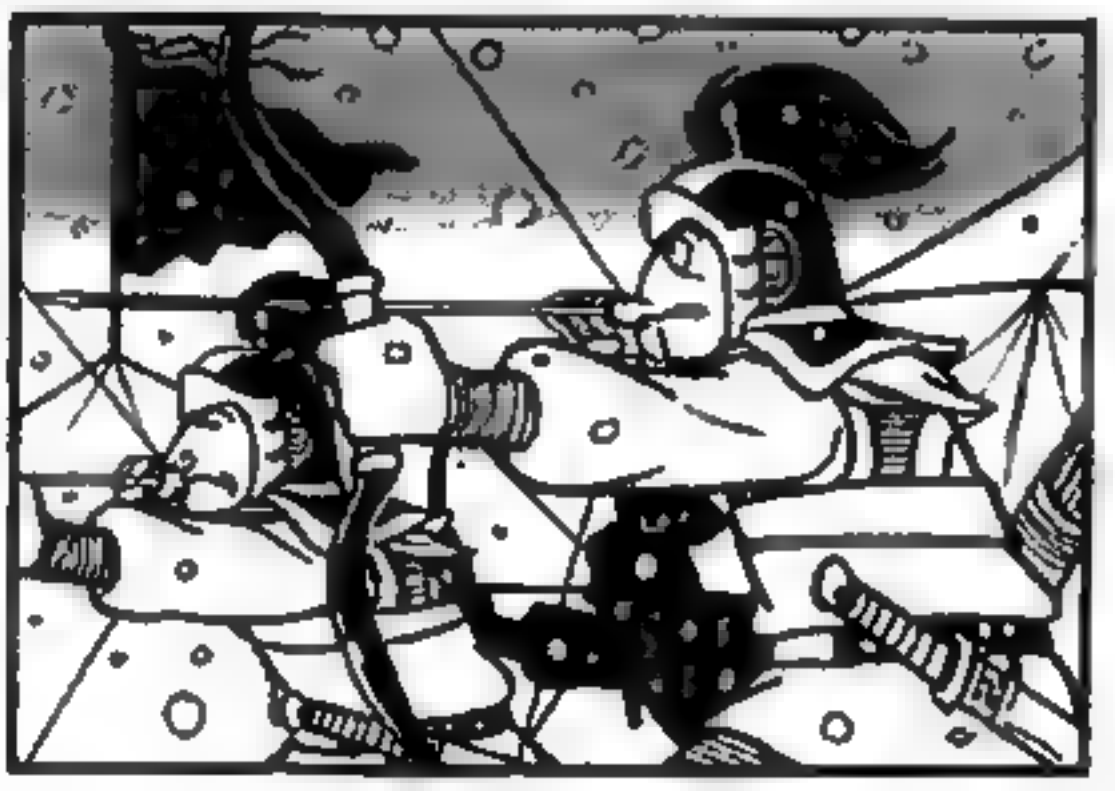


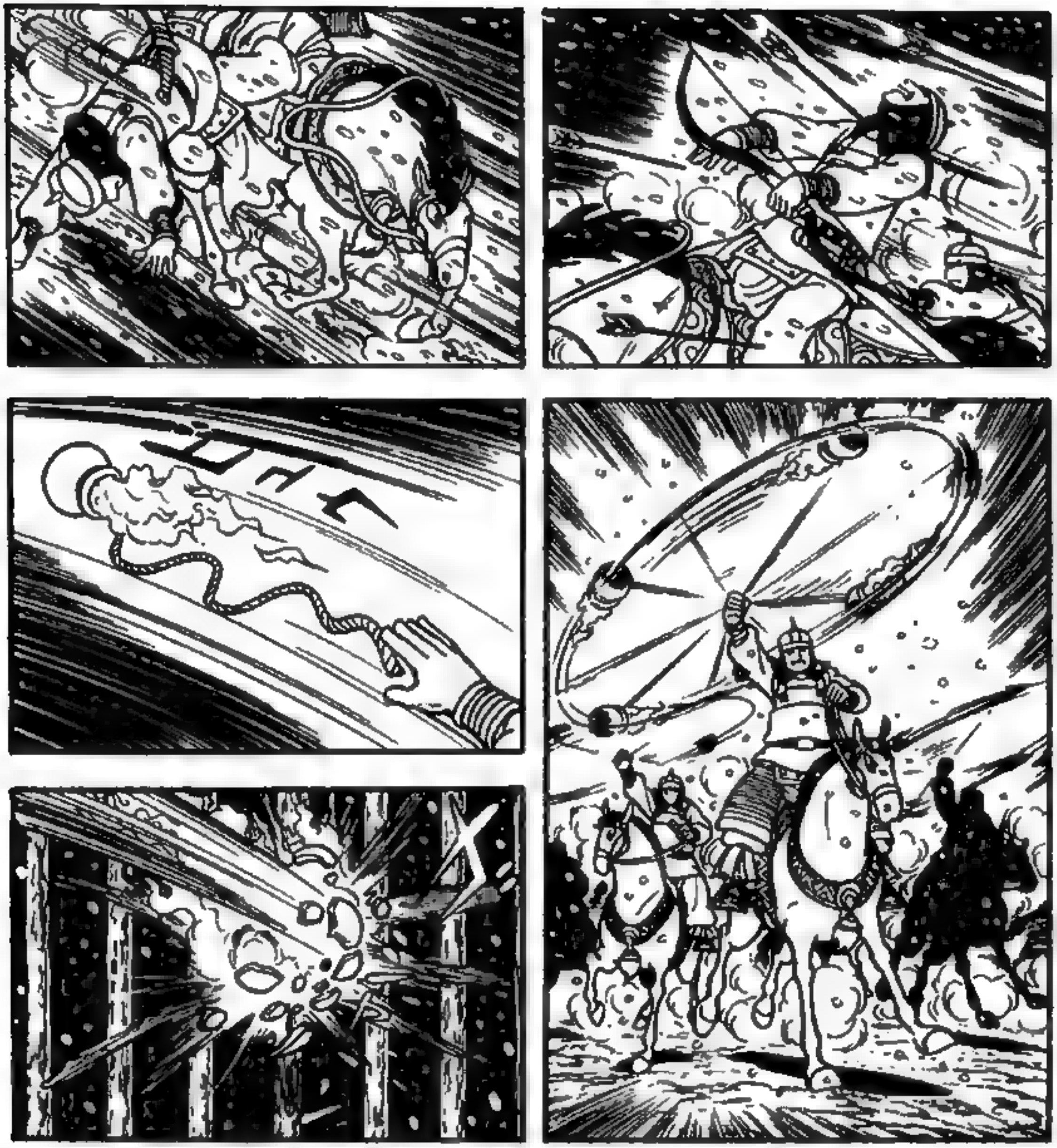


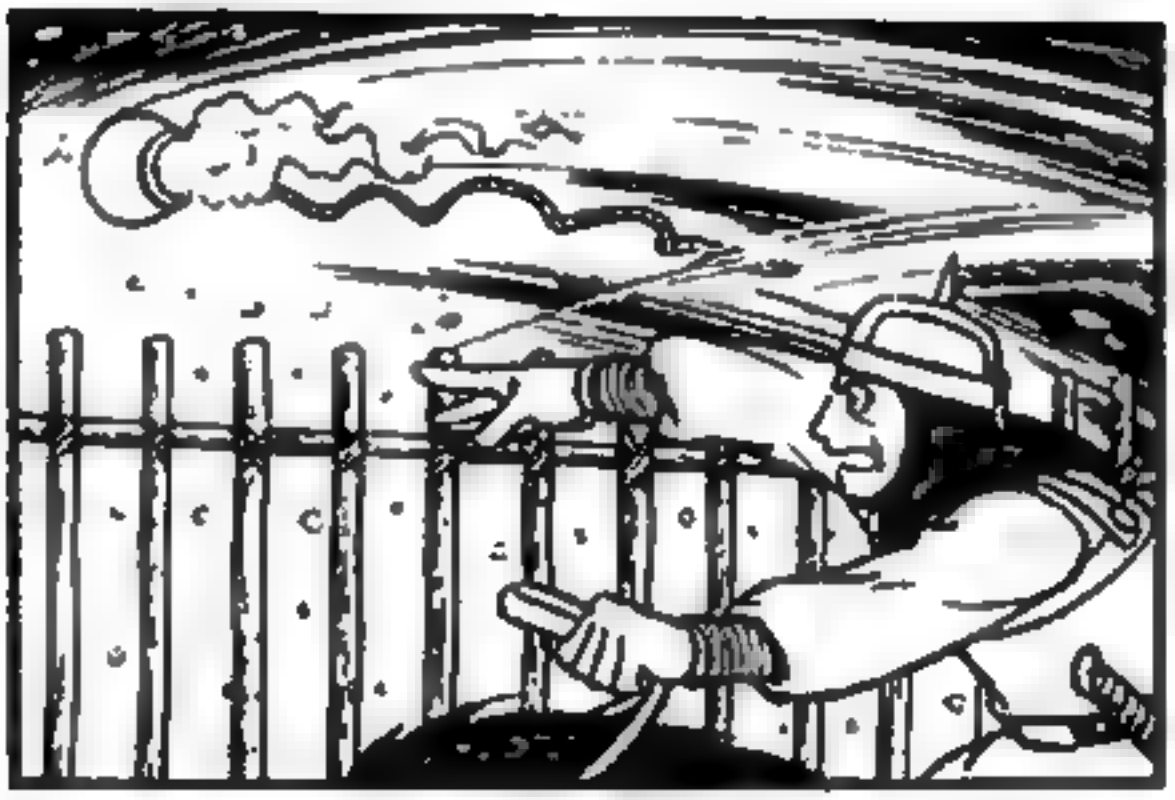


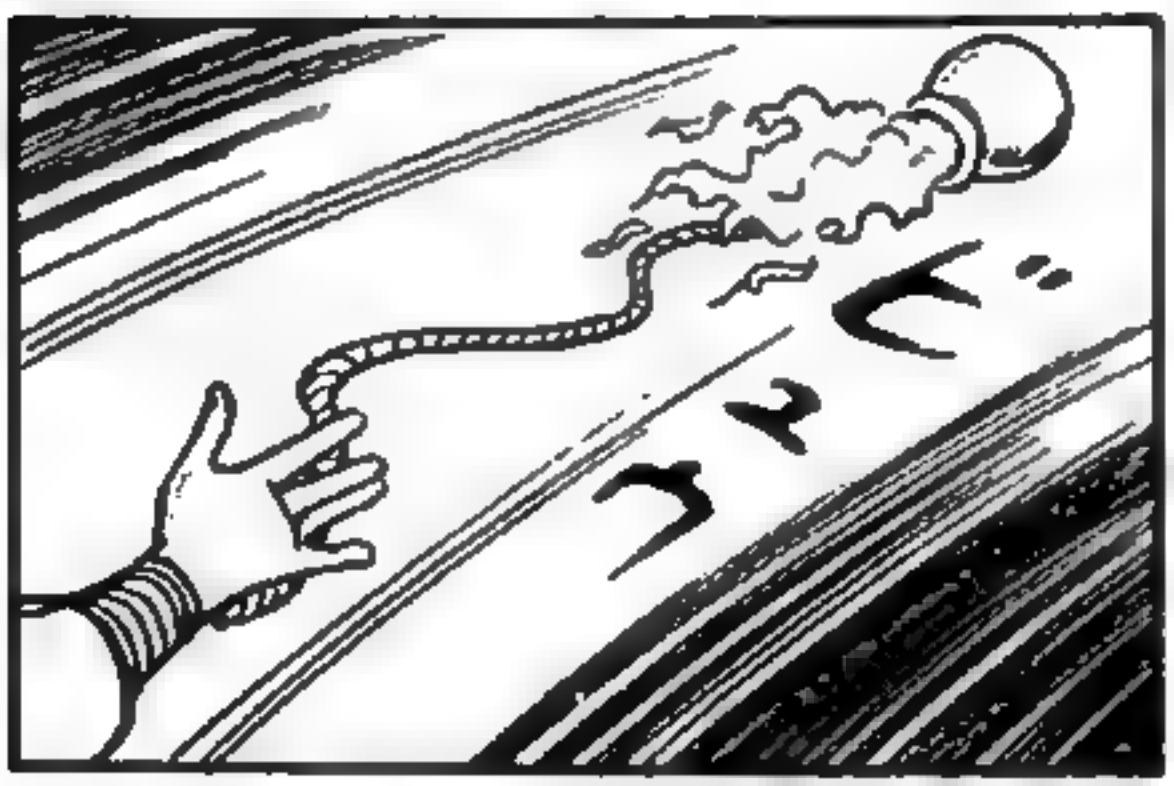
ARCHERS!
SHOOT!

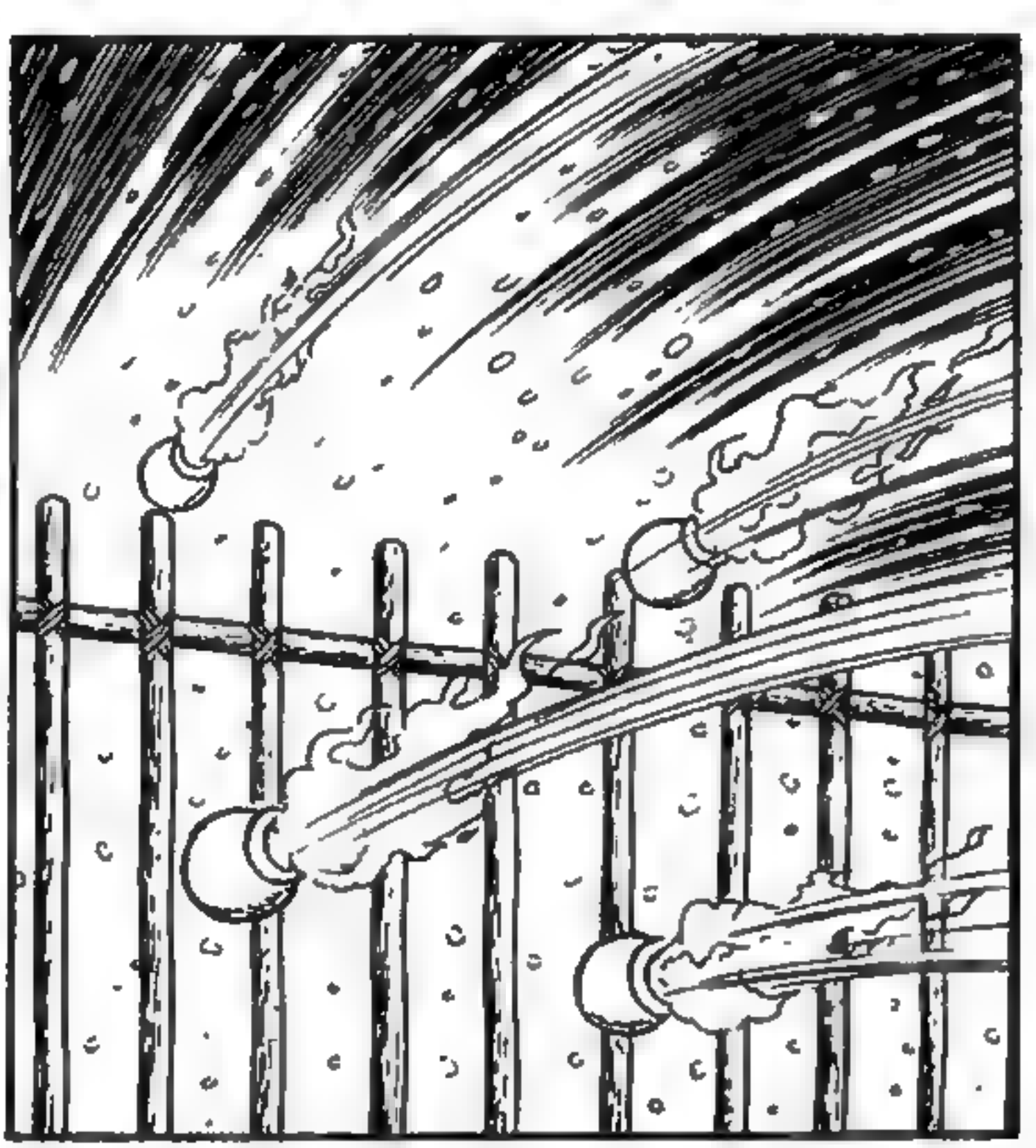





AGHH!

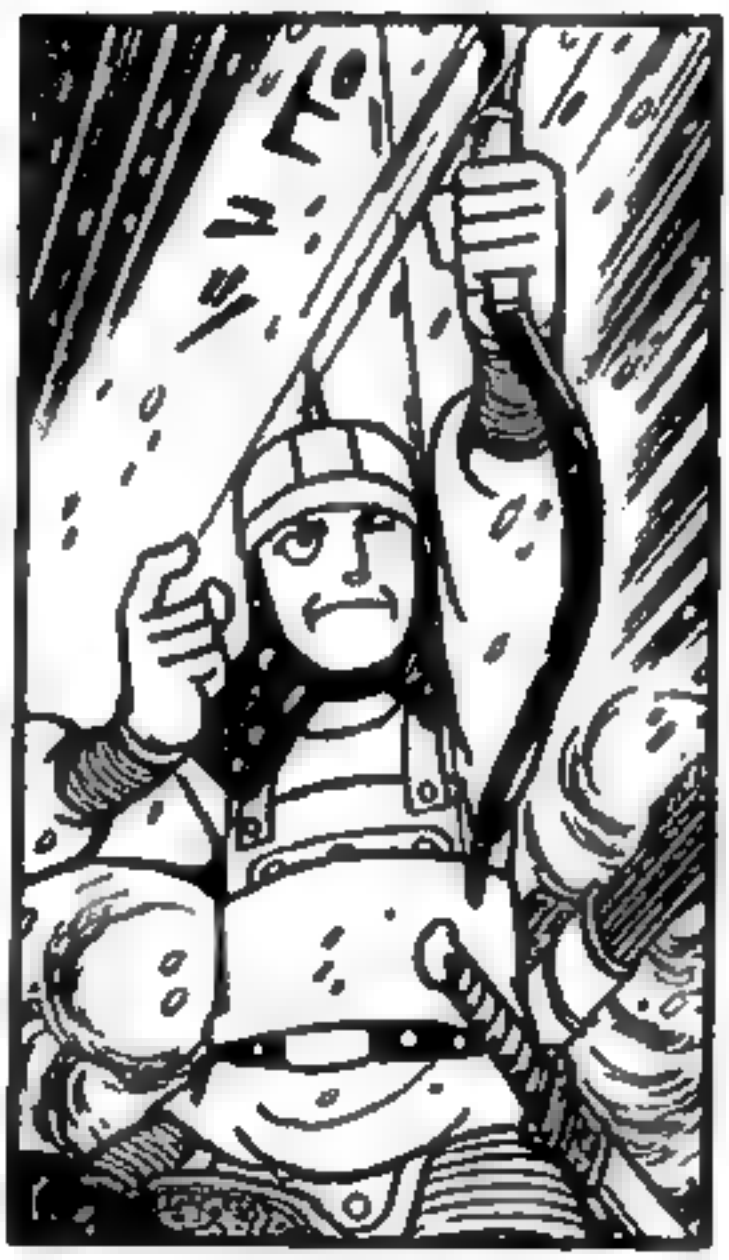






DON'T LET OUR FOOD SUPPLIES CATCH ON FIRE!
PUT OUT THE FIRES!

ヒュン



ヒュン

THAT'S ENOUGH FOR TONIGHT! RETREAT BACK TO BASE!

DAMN THOSE ANNOYING BASTARDS!

曹

曹

VERY MINOR BUT LOW MORALE AND WEARINESS ARE PALPABLE AMONG OUR CAMPS, SIR.

AND WHAT WERE THE CASUALTIES FOR LAST NIGHT'S RAID?

THE WEI RIVER MAY BE DEEP BUT THERE MUST BE SEVERAL FORDS PERMITTING THEIR SKIRMISHERS TO CROSS AND RAID OUR CAMPS.

NOT SURPRISING THEY FEEL UNNERVED AFTER BEING RAIDED NIGHT AFTER NIGHT...

AND NOT ONLY THAT, WE NOW HAVE THE SNOWY WEATHER TO WORRY ABOUT.

YES, BUT THE PROBLEM IS WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHERE...

THE ENEMY QIANG SOLDIERS ARE USED TO THE COLD AND IF WORSE COMES TO WORST, THEY CAN WEATHER THE WINTER INSIDE TONG PASS. WE, ON THE OTHER HAND, ARE FORCED TO CAMP OUT HERE IN THE FIELD EVEN IF A BLIZZARD WERE TO COME.

.....

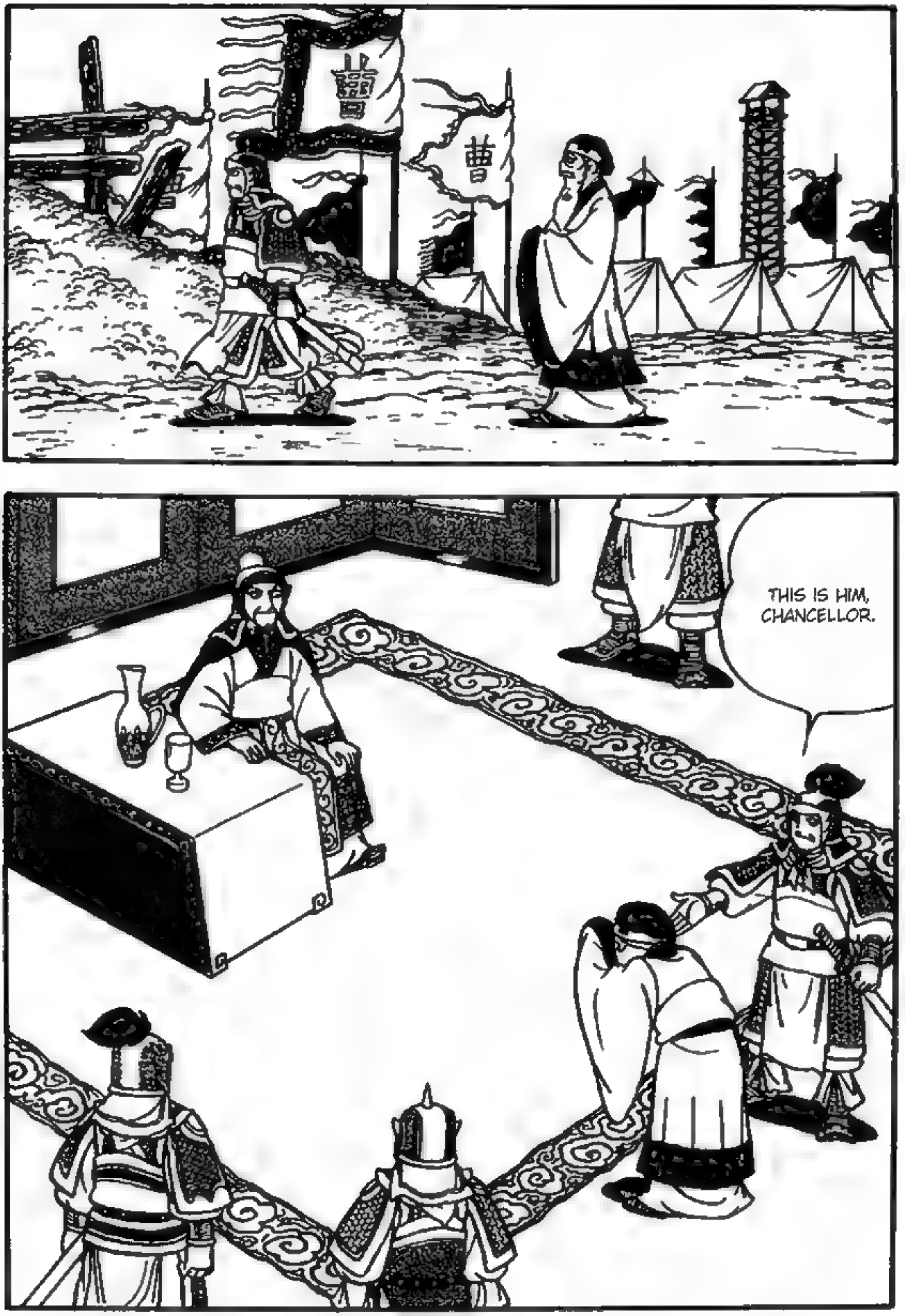
.....

WHAT ARE WE TO DO...?

EXCUSE ME, CHANCELLOR, BUT A STRANGE OLD MAN HAS SHOWED UP, WISHING TO GIVE YOU ADVICE ON MILITARY MATTERS.

HOW INTEREST-ING. LET HIM IN.

HE WANTS TO GIVE *ME* ADVICE? ON *MILITARY MATTERS?*


曹
曹
THIS IS HIM, CHANCELLOR.

I AM LOU ZIBO BUT MY TAOIST NAME IS PLUM-BLOSSOM DREAMER. I DWELL ON THE ZHONGNAN MOUNTAINS.

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

IT APPEARS TO ME YOU WISH TO CONSTRUCT A FORTRESS AT THE NORTHERN PORTION OF WEI RIVER BUT I AM PUZZLED WHY YOU STILL HAVE NOT ACCOMPLISHED IT.

I HEAR YOU WISH TO GIVE ME ADVICE. WHAT EXACTLY MIGHT THAT BE?

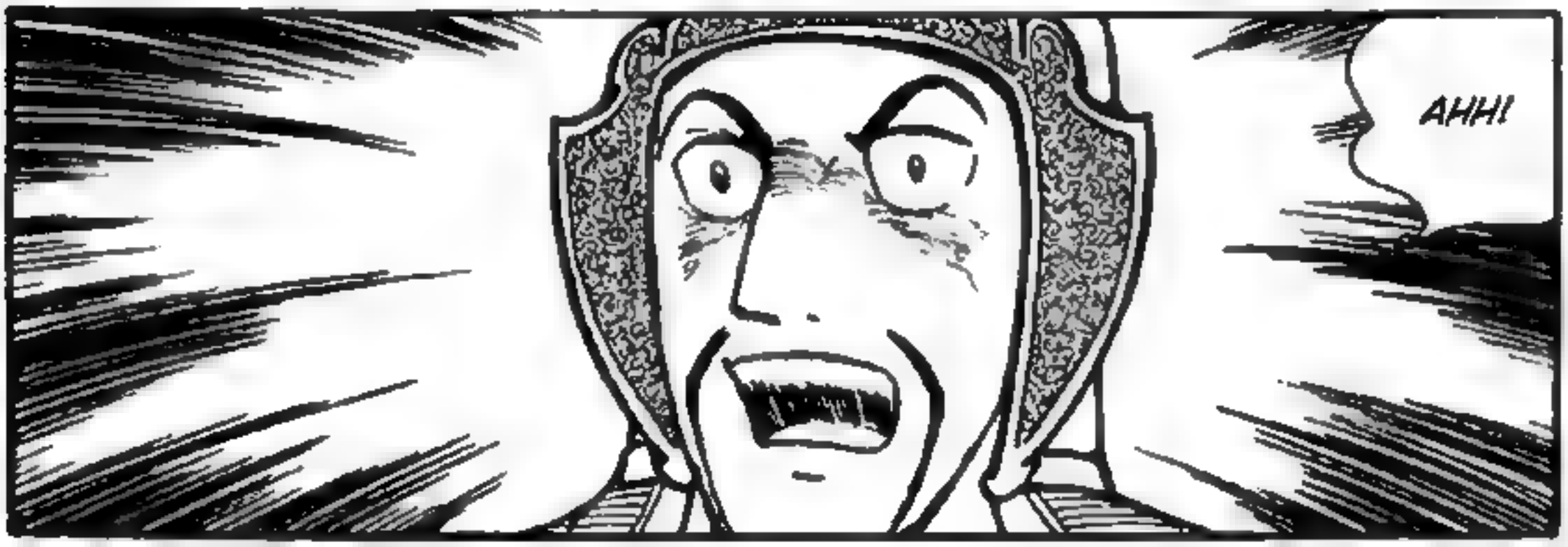
HOW CAN SIR READ THE HEARTS OF MEN SO EASILY YET CANNOT READ THE WAYS OF HEAVEN?

YOU WONDER WHY? THE SOIL HERE REFUSES TO CLUMP PROPERLY AND IS EASILY TORN DOWN.

THE HEAVENS HAVE GIVEN YOU SNOW AND THE COLD.

THE WAYS OF HEAVEN?

SO HAVE YOUR MEN POUR WATER AND YOUR FORTRESS SHALL BE COMPLETED OVERNIGHT.


AHH!

I THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART! HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO FOOLISH TO NEGLECT THE HEAVENS?

OH NO, I'M MERELY A HERMIT. I HAVE NO NEED FOR MATERIAL GOODS.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE AS A REWARD?

THANK YOU AND FAREWELL.

PLEASE EXCUSE ME THEN.

曹

曹

曹

HM?

ORDER ALL ABLE-BODIED MEN TO CONSTRUCT ANOTHER FORTRESS TODAY.

?

YES, AND THAT OLD MAN JUST NOW TOLD US HOW TO PREVENT THAT!

BUT CHANCELLOR, IT WILL ONLY COLLAPSE AGAIN DUE TO THE POOR SOIL QUALITY.

YES, SIR.
BEGIN THE CONSTRUC-TION AT ONCE!

UGH, THIS IS HEAVY...
ONE, TWO! ONE, TWO!
ONE, TWO! ONE, TWO!

POUR WATER ON THE FORT!

HAHAHA. WORRY NOT.

WELL, THE BASIC FORTRESS SHAPE HAS BEEN SET BUT I FEAR IT WON'T STAND UP ON ITS OWN FOR TOO LONG.

ORDERS ARE ORDERS, I GUESS.

WE'RE POURING WHAT NOW?

NGHH!

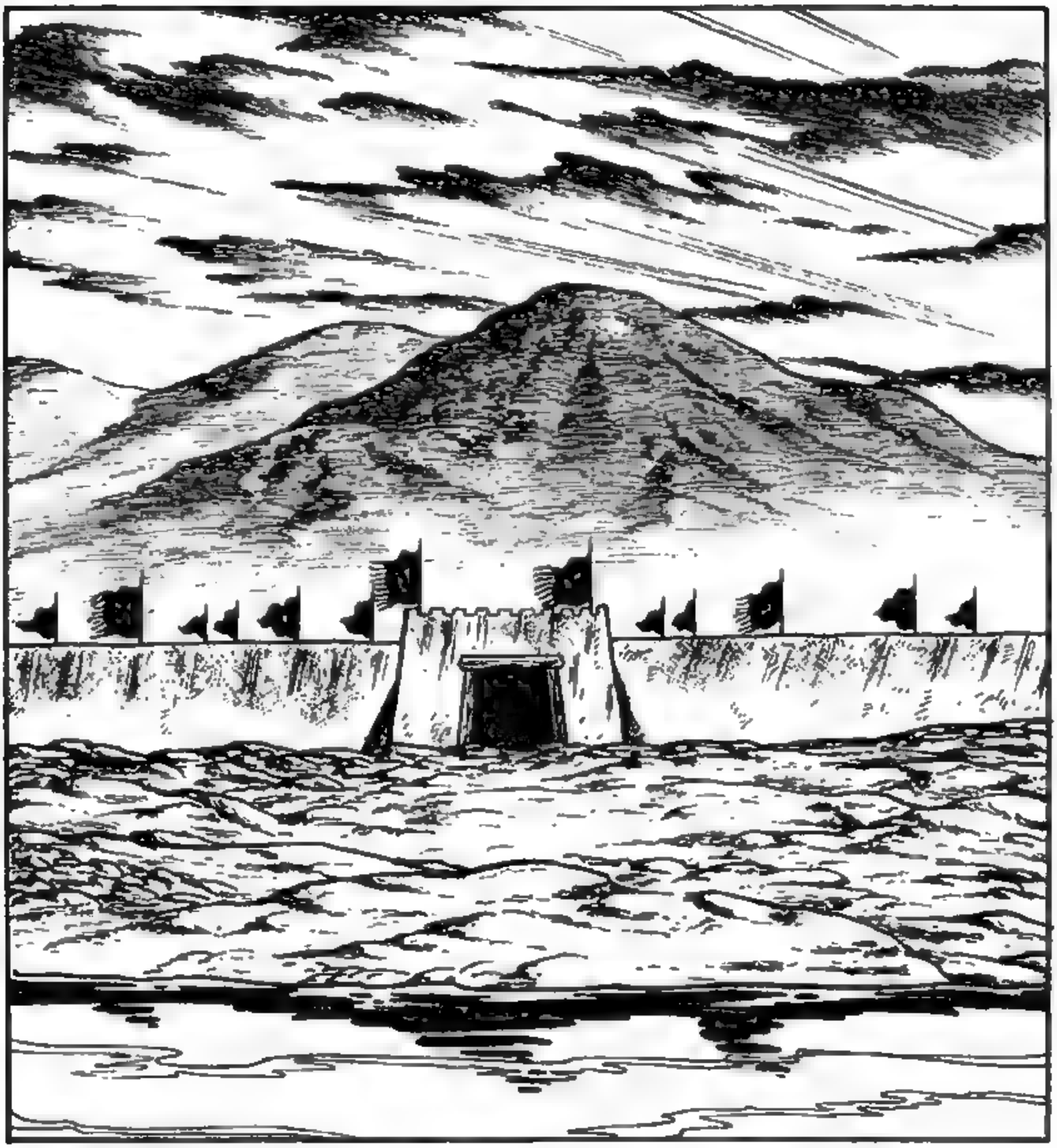
PASS IT ALONG.

HAHA, OUR NIGHTLY RAIDING PROBLEMS ARE OVER AT LAST!

YAAAWN!

AGHHH!

HM?



SIR!

IS THAT A FORT!?

WHAT IS IT!?

SIIIIRR!

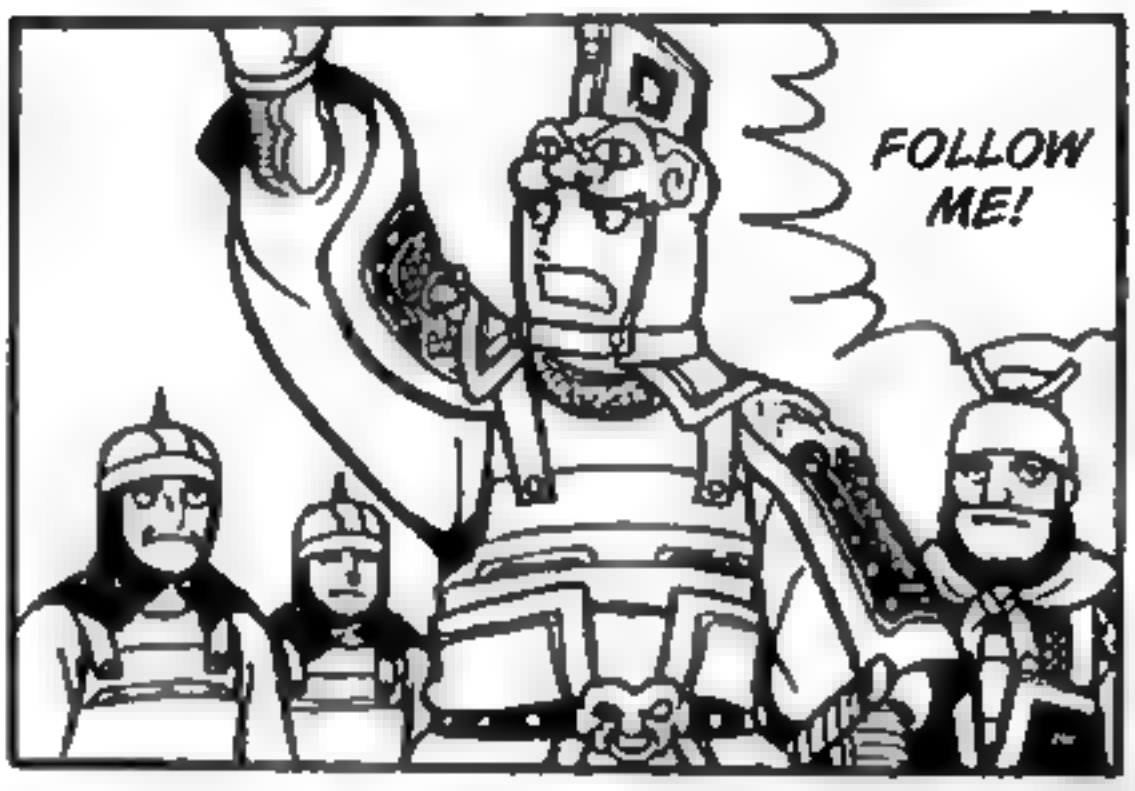
WHAT!

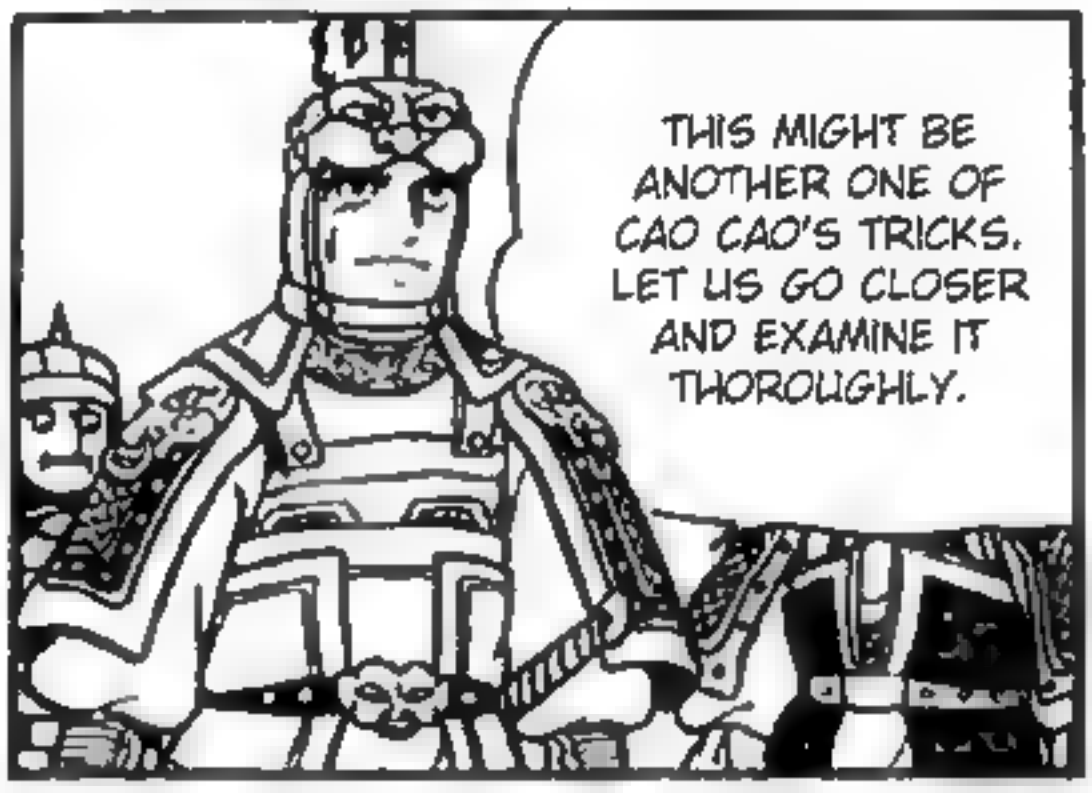
THE ENEMIES HAVE CONSTRUCTED A FORT IN A SINGLE NIGHT!

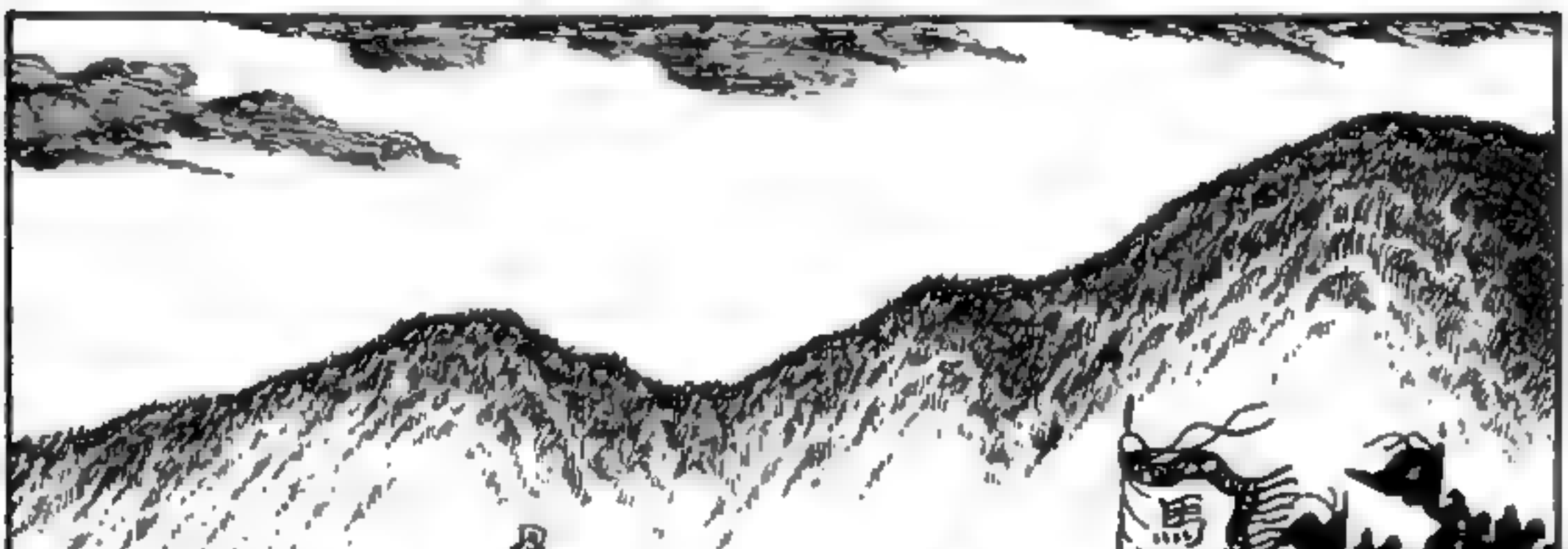
WHAT IN THE WORLD?
AHHH!

MNN...

SIR, IT LOOKS AS IF THE FORTRESS IS MADE FROM ICE.

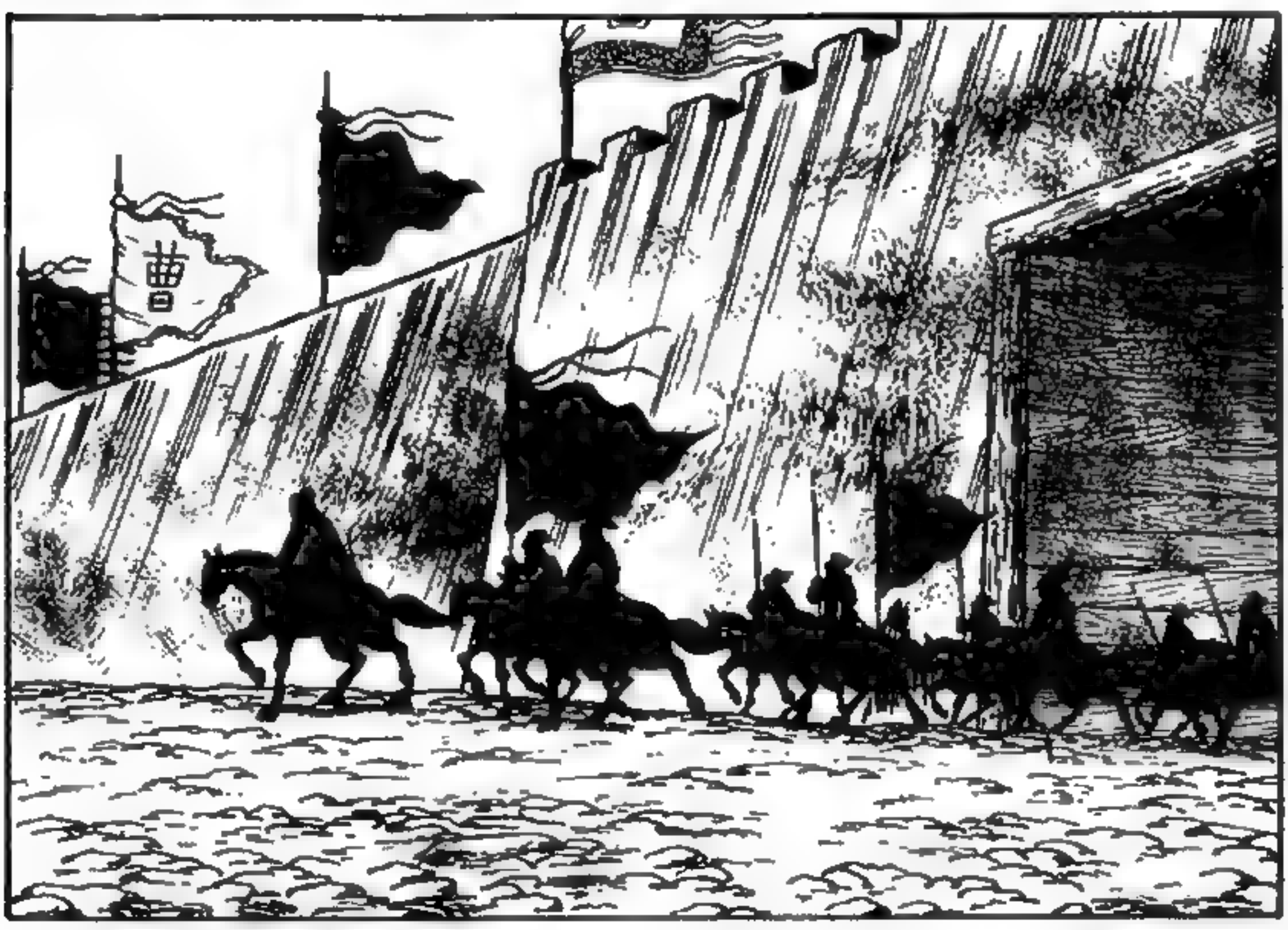

FOLLOW ME!


THIS MIGHT BE ANOTHER ONE OF CAO CAO'S TRICKS. LET US GO CLOSER AND EXAMINE IT THOROUGHLY.


馬

CHALLENGE TO A DUEL

LET US GO GREET OUR CURIOUS VISITORS.


曹

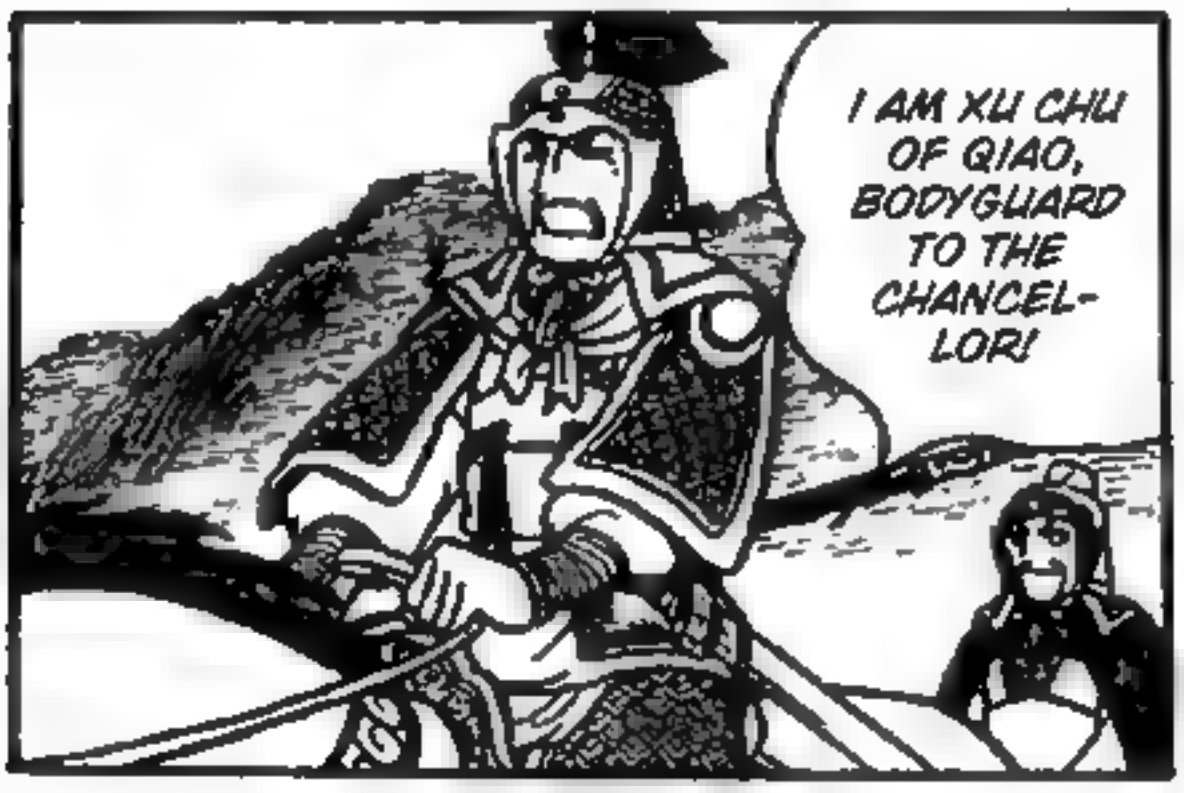
THE ENEMIES ARE COMING OUT!

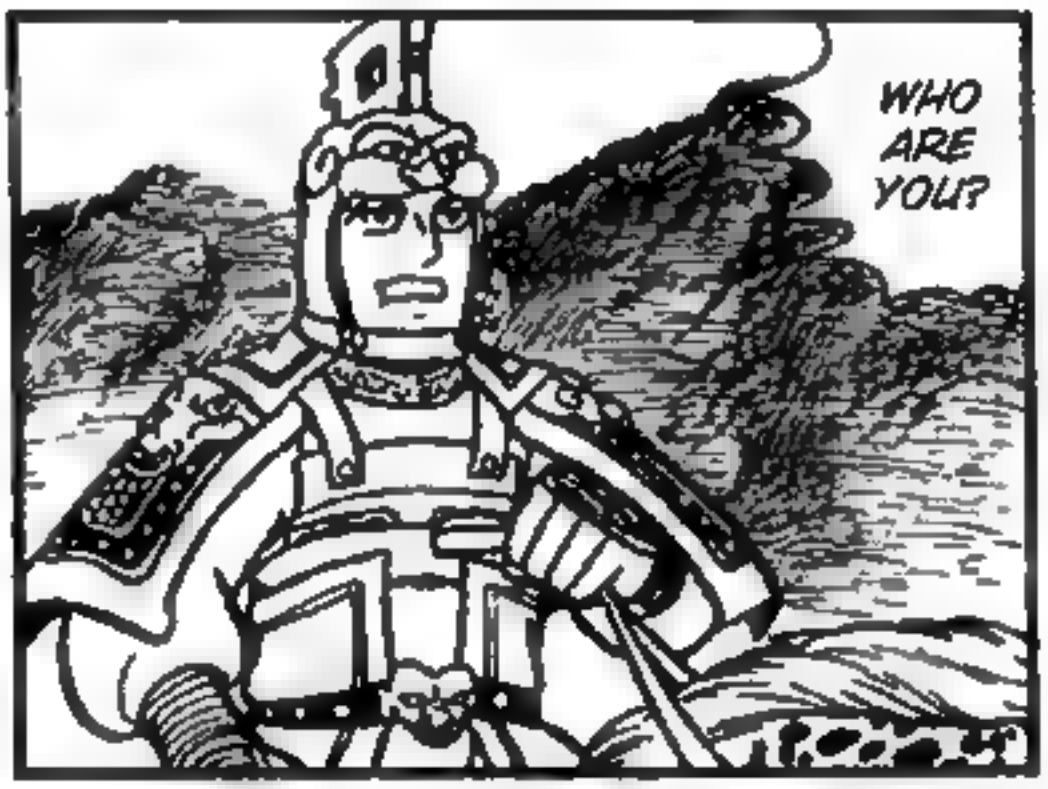
MA CHAO, I AM COMING FORTH ALONE. I HOPE YOU WILL TOO, FOR THERE IS SOMETHING I WISH TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.

曹

WHAT IS IT YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT?

BUT WITH HEAVEN'S BLESSING, I HAVE MANAGED TO DO EXACTLY THAT WITHIN A SINGLE NIGHT.
曹
曹
YOU PROBABLY NEVER IMAGINED THAT I COULD ACTUALLY COMPLETE A FORTRESS, DID YOU?
SHUT YOUR FOUL MOUTH! YOU THINK THAT THE ANGUISHED SOULS OF MY FATHER AND BROTHERS WILL BE APPEASED THAT WAY!?
CAN'T YOU SEE EVEN THE HEAVENS ARE ON MY SIDE? I SUGGEST YOU GIVE UP NOW WHEN YOU CAN.
YOU DARE EVEN THINK OF HARMING THE CHANCELLOR WHEN I'M AROUND!?
HALT!
THE ONLY THING I DESIRE IS YOUR HEAD!


I AM XU CHU OF QIAO, BODYGUARD TO THE CHANCEL-LOR!

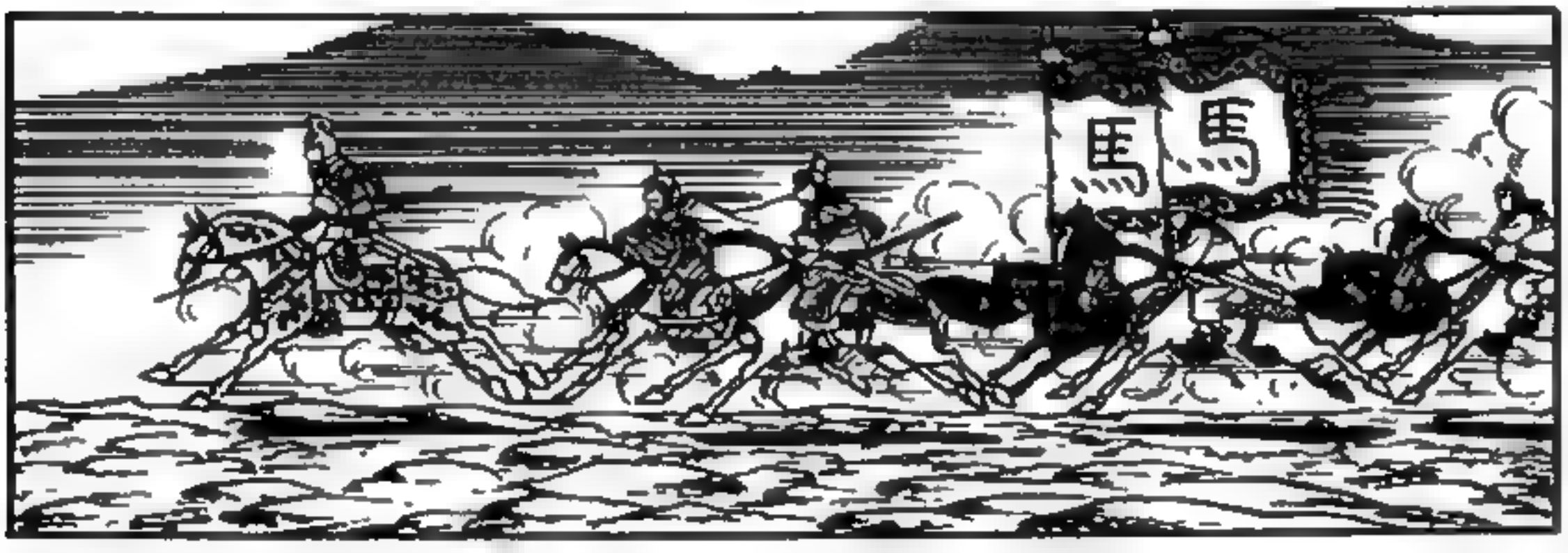

WHO ARE YOU?

WITHIN TIME, YOU WILL TASTE THE FURY OF MY SPEAR BUT SINCE I'VE ONLY COME TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT YOUR FORTRESS, I SHALL WITHDRAW FOR TODAY.

I SEE. I HAD HEARD THERE WAS A MAN NAMED XU CHU SERVING CAO CAO...

YOU DARE SHOW YOUR BACK TO AN ENEMY!?

RETREAT!



OF COURSE NOT. IT LOOKS TO ME HE LOST HIS SPIRIT AFTER BEING GLARED DOWN BY YOU.

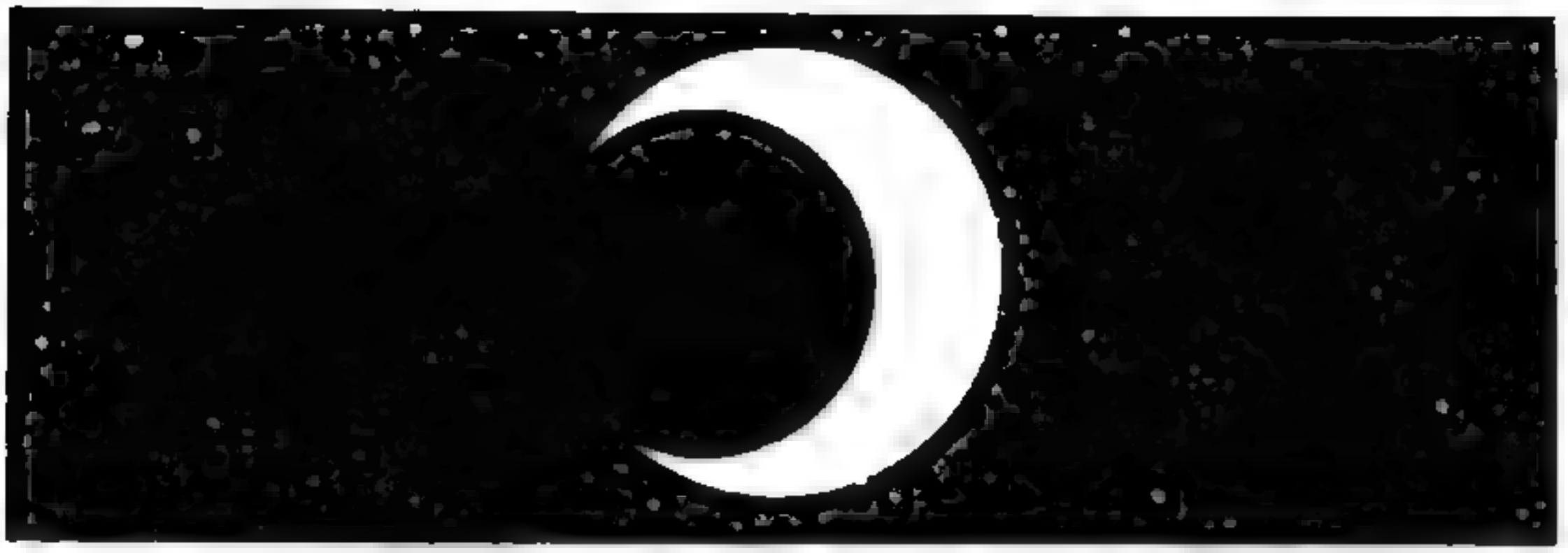
IGNORING ME, MA CHAO!?

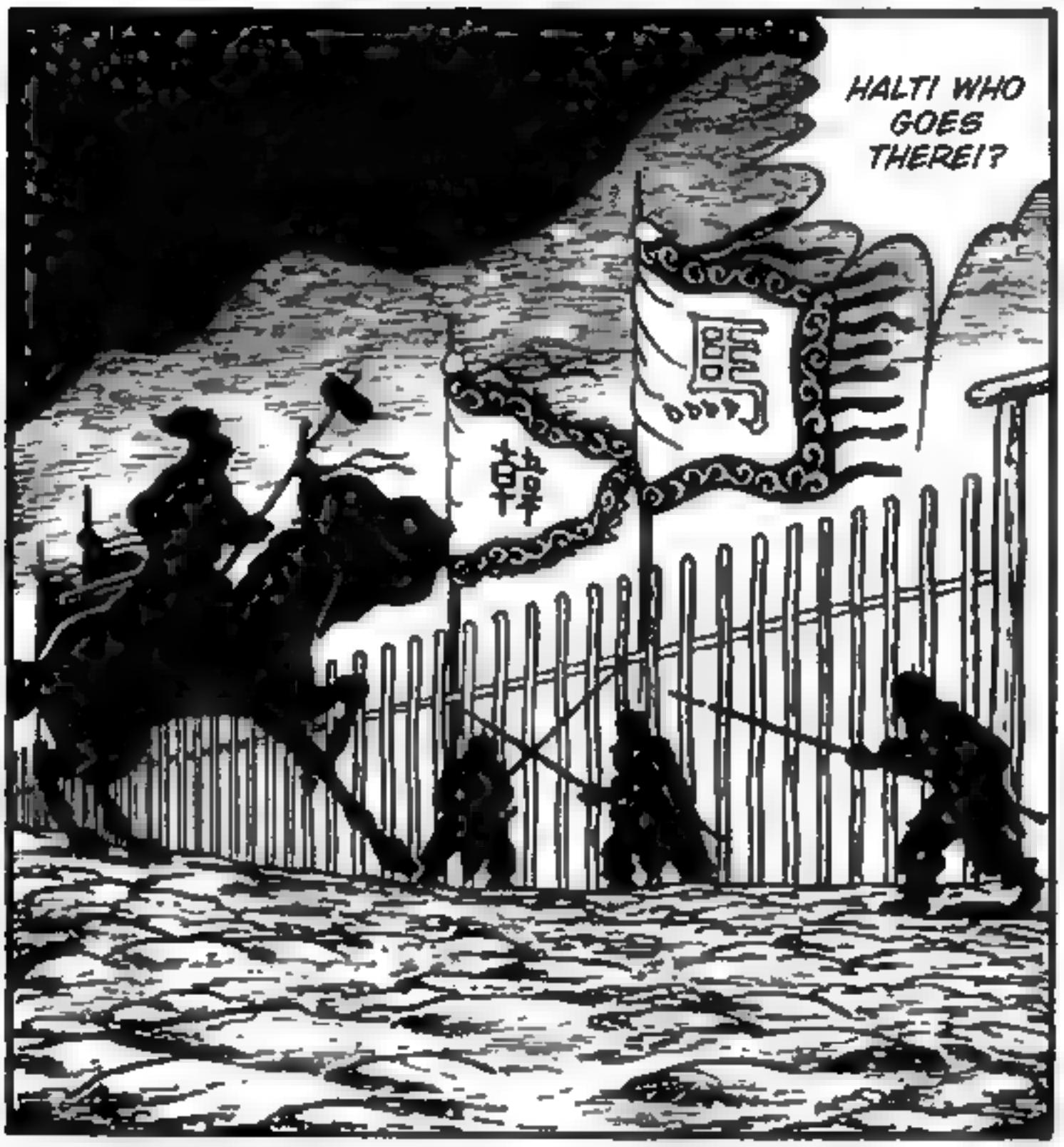
HMM... YES, YOU MIGHT JUST BE ABLE TO PULL THAT OFF...

CHANCELLOR, PLEASE GRANT ME A DUEL WITH MA CHAO. I PROMISE I CAN CAPTURE HIM ALIVE.

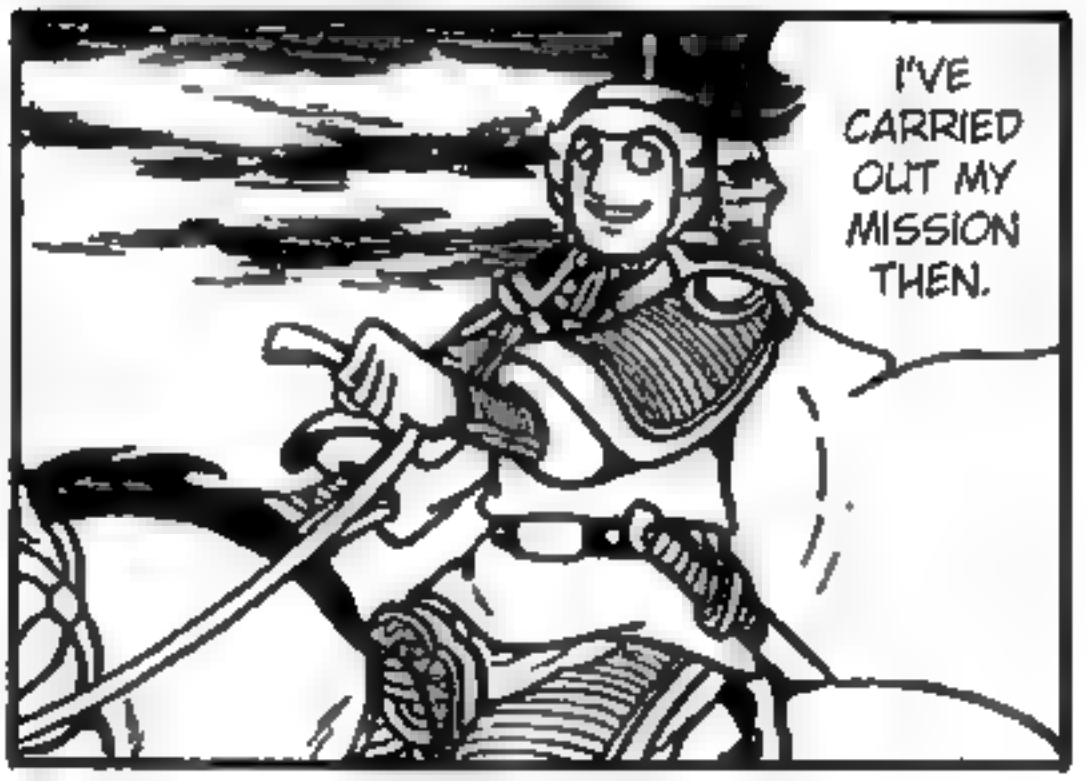
I AM MOST THANKFUL, MY LORD.

PERMISSION GRANTED.




HALT! WHO GOES THERE!?

I AM CAO CAO'S MESSENGER, HERE TO DELIVER A LETTER TO MA CHAO!


I'VE CARRIED OUT MY MISSION THEN.

TAKE THAT TO THE GENERAL AT ONCE!

SIR, CAO CAO'S MESSENGER HAS JUST COME BY TO DELIVER THIS LETTER TO YOU.

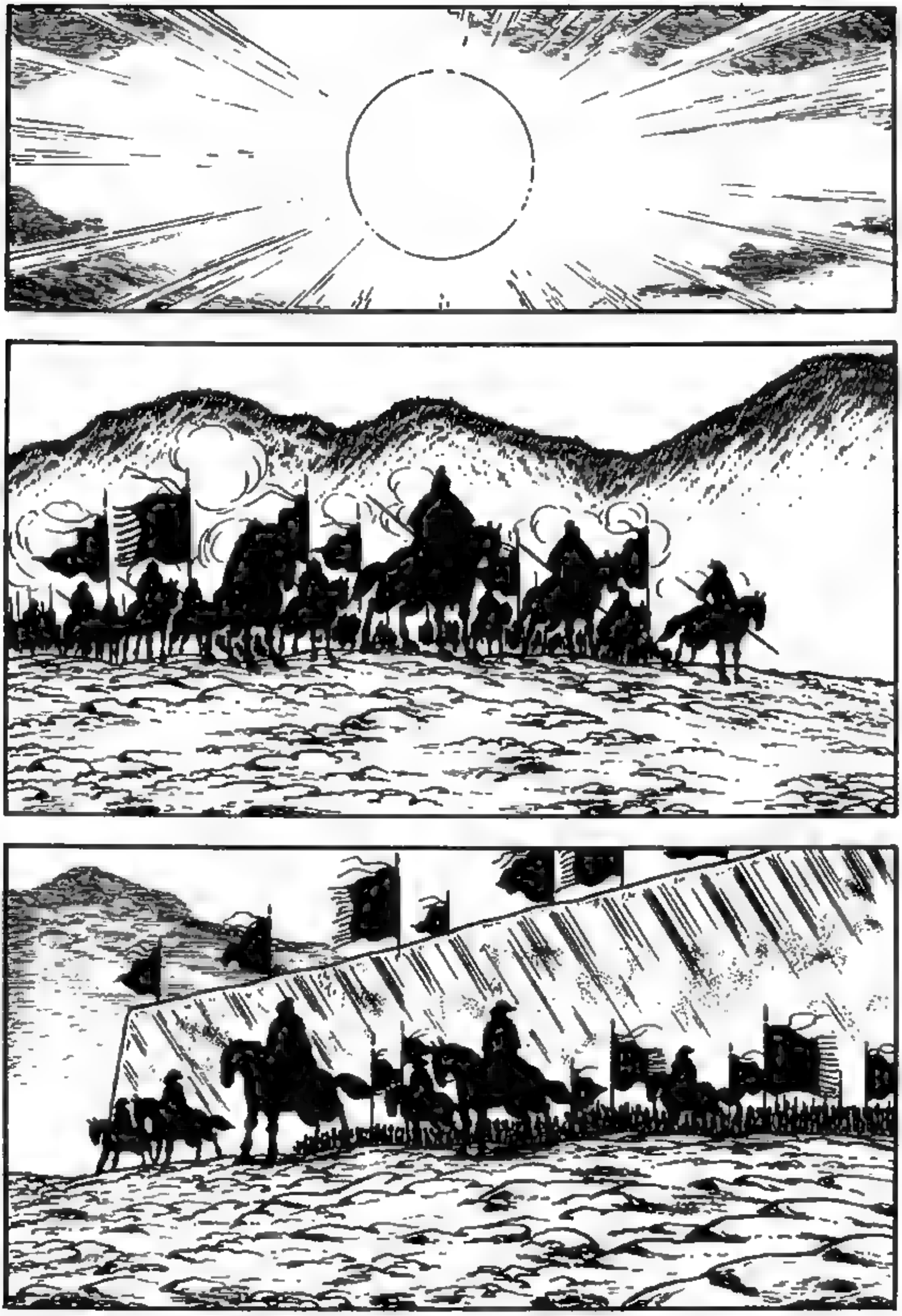
NGHH!

HE GOES ON TO SAY THAT I'M NOTHING BUT A COWARDLY MUTT IF I REFUSE...!

THAT MAN CALLED XU CHU HAS CHALLENGED ME TO A DUEL.
WHAT IS IT, SIR?

SO BE IT! IT'LL BE MORE EXCITING THAT WAY!

BUT XU CHU IS ONE OF CAO CAO'S ABLEST WARRIORS, SIR.



I AM HERE!

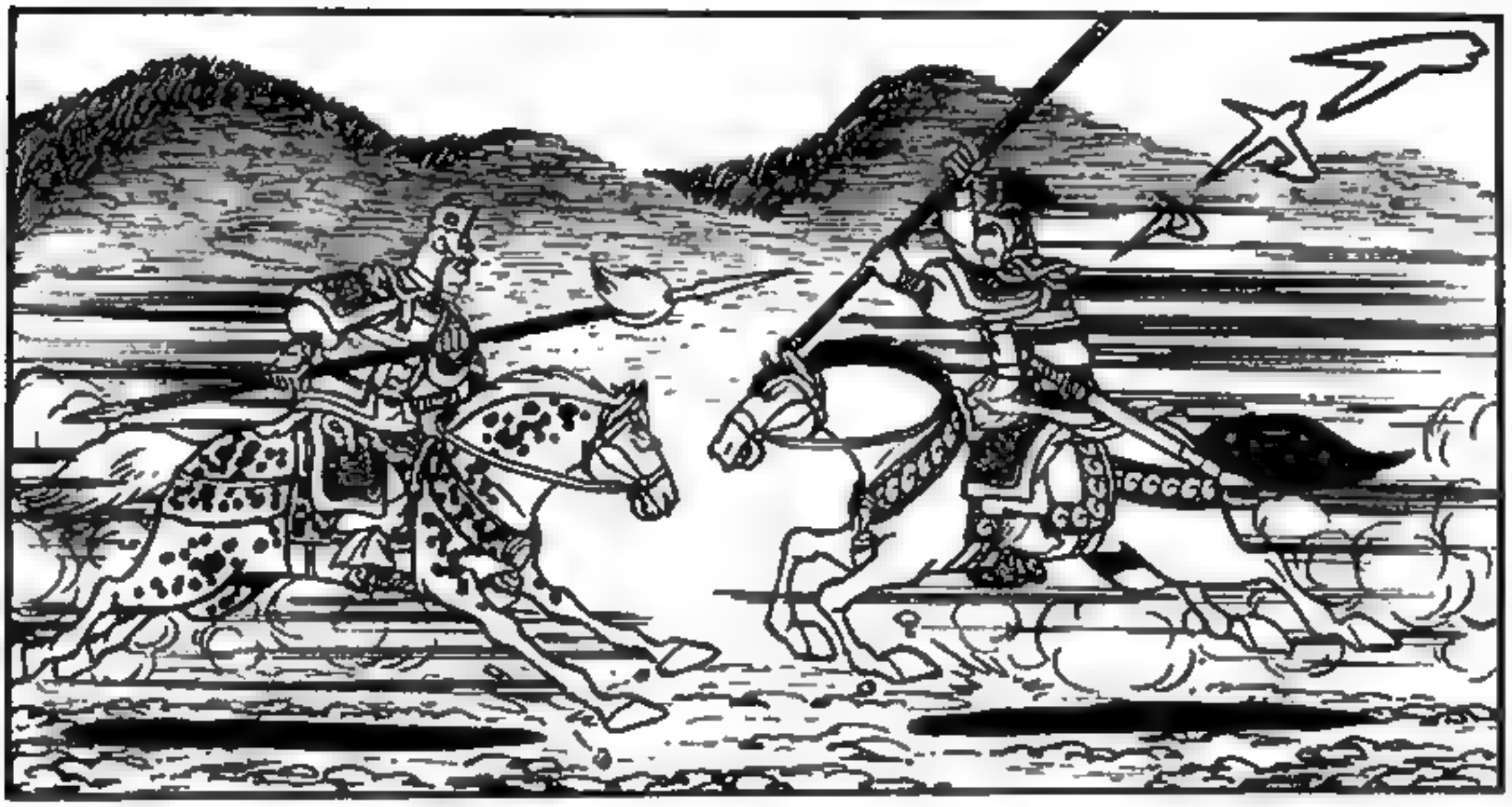
XU CHU, SHOW YOURSELF!

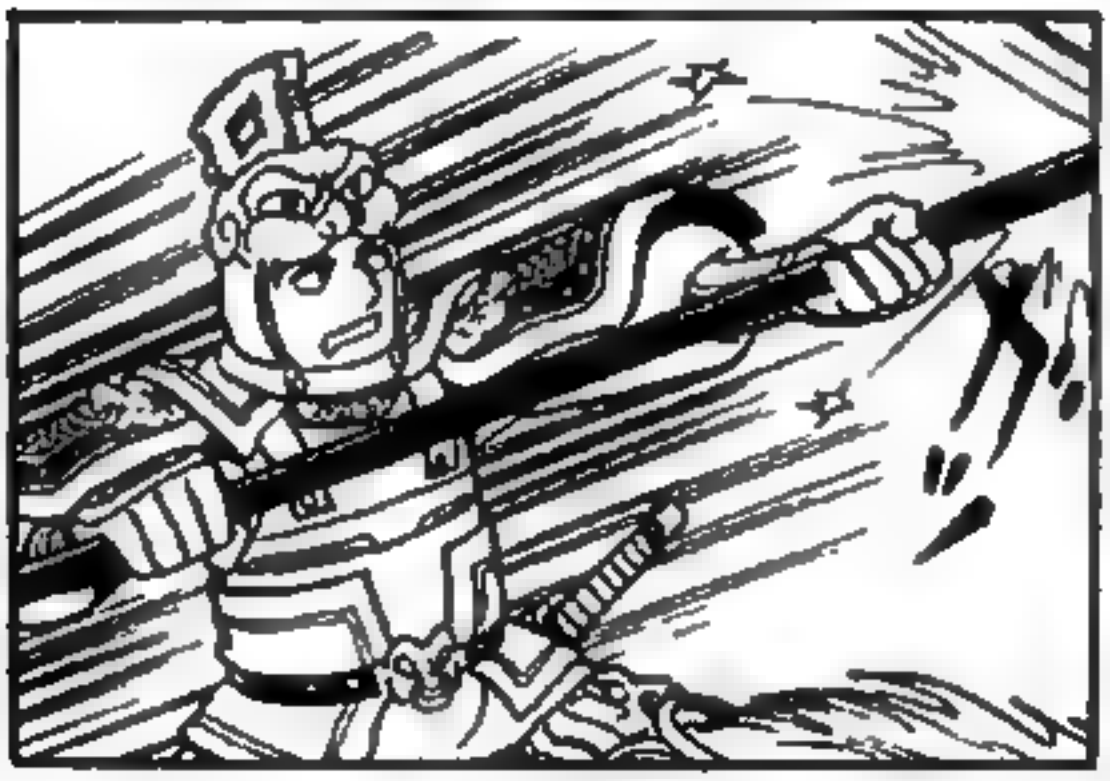
SO THE TIGER OF XILIANG LIVES UP TO HIS REPUTATION!

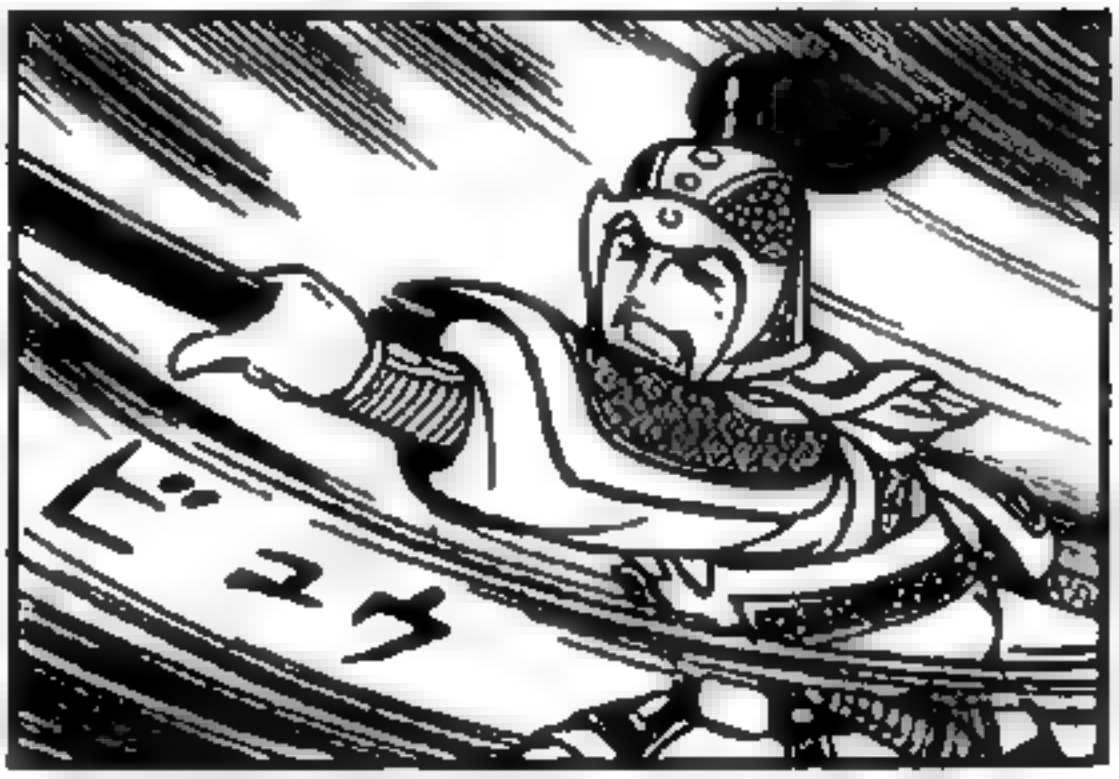
I ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE.

AND I TOO!

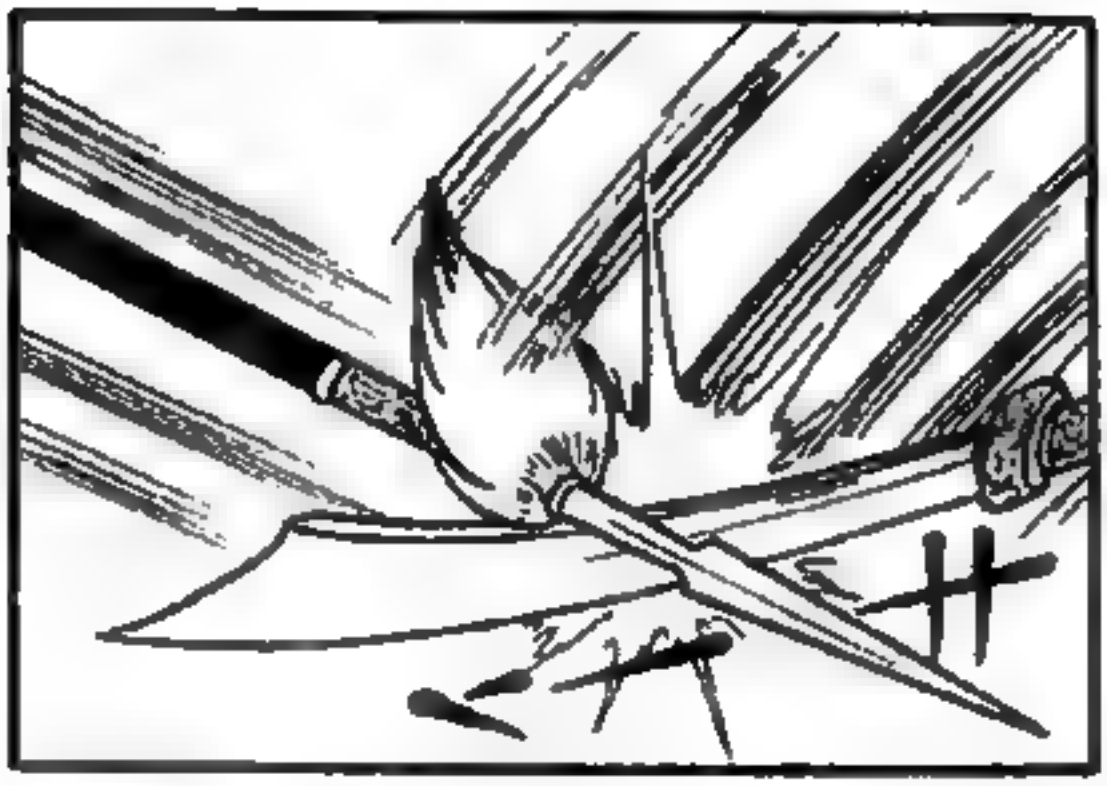
HERE I COME!

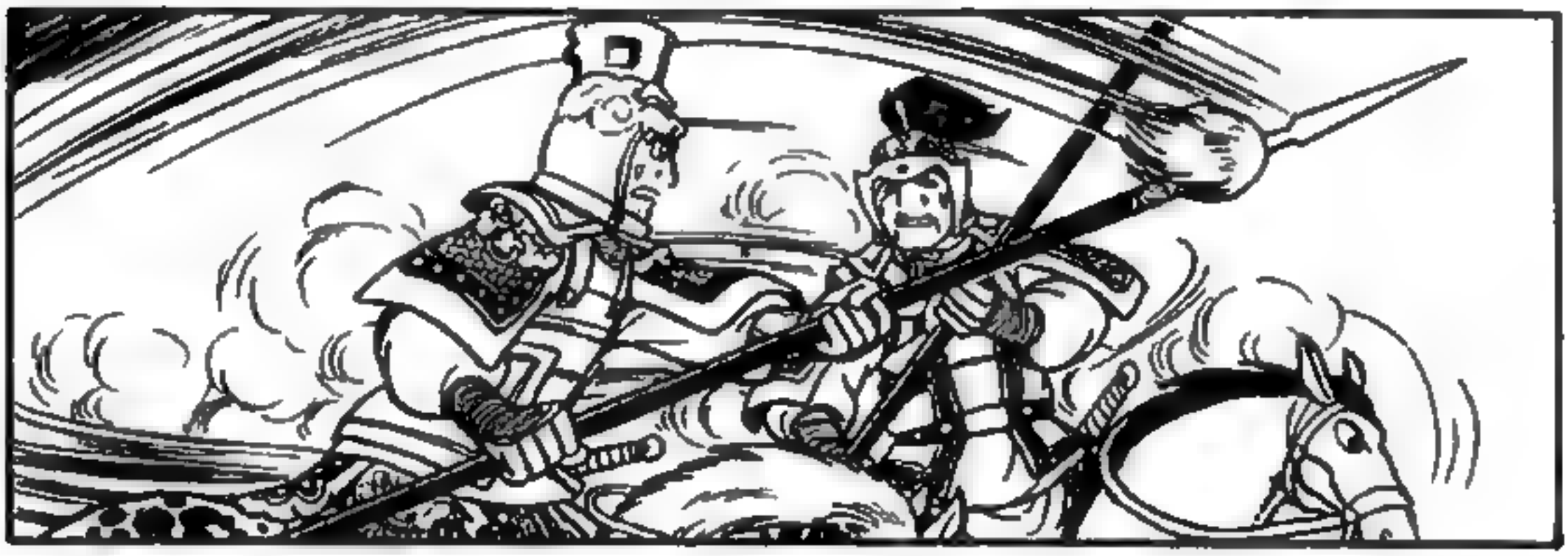






TO THINK HE COULD SO EVENLY TRADE BLOW FOR BLOW AGAINST XU CHU... I UNDERESTIMATED YOU, MA CHAO...





STAY RIGHT HERE FOR A MOMENT!

?

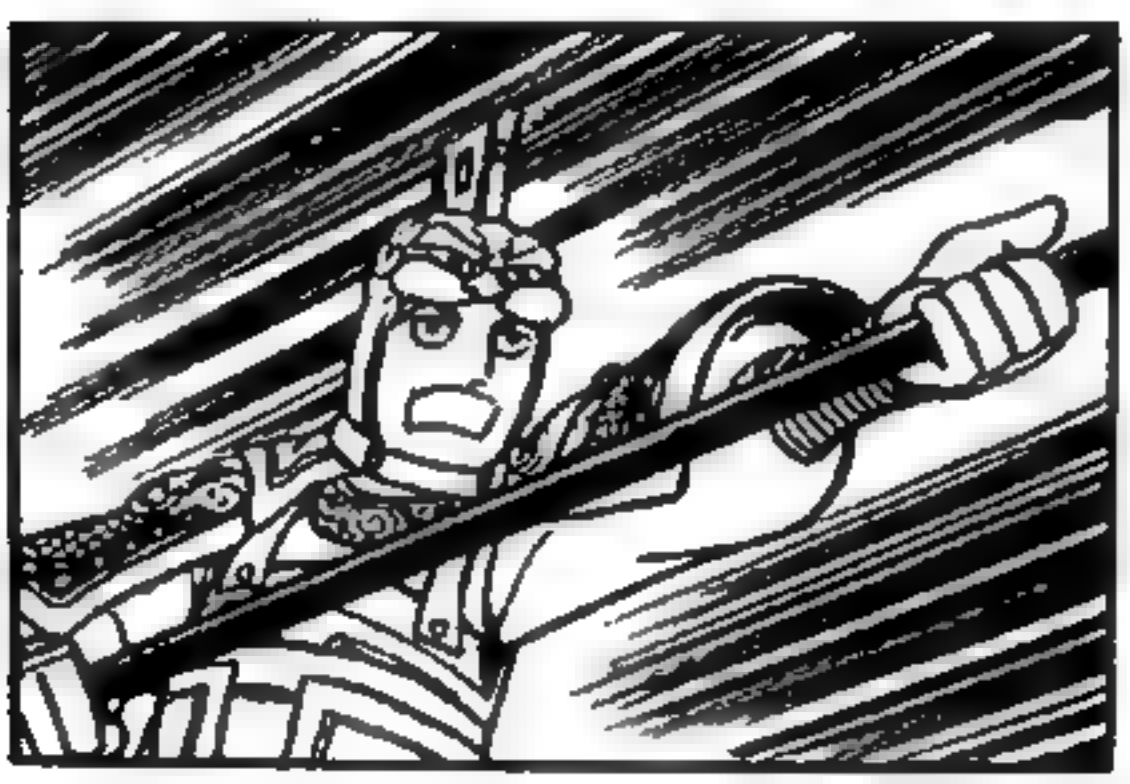
GIVE ME A HAND WITH THIS ARMOUR!

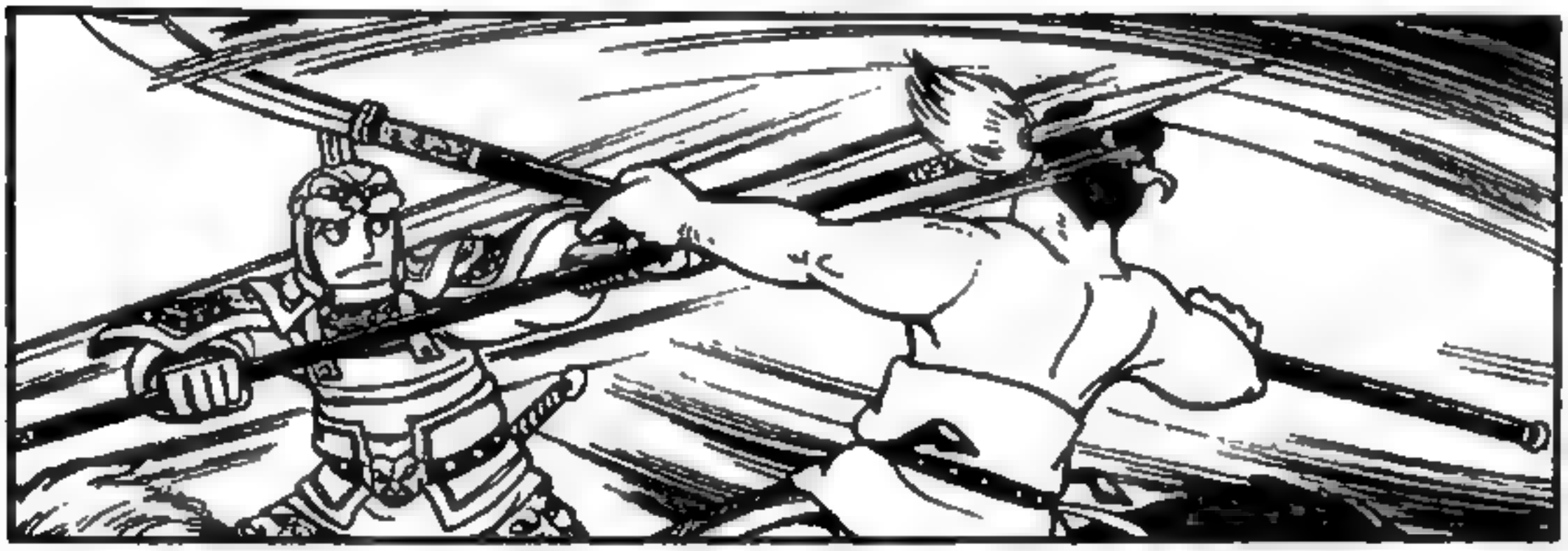
?

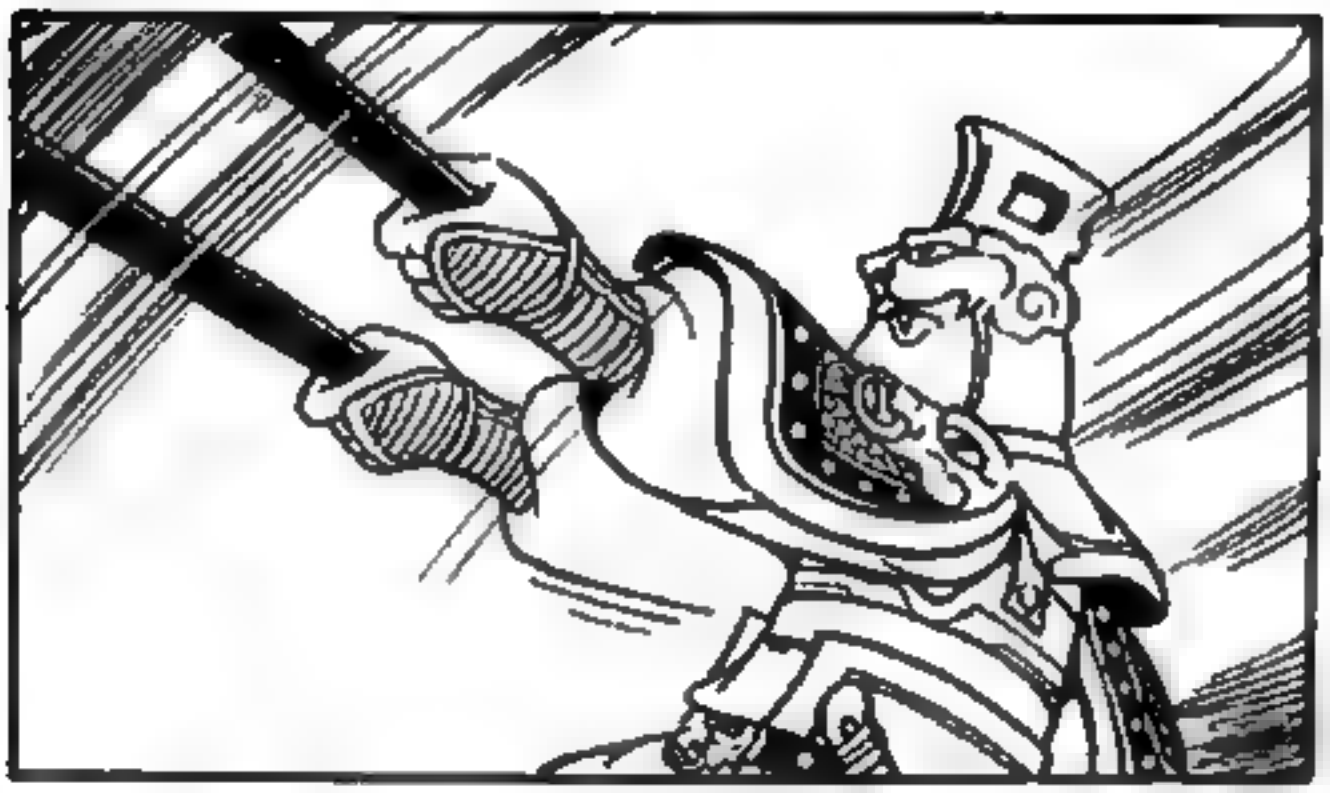
THAT'S MUCH BETTER.

THIS HEAVY ARMOUR IS ONLY GETTING IN THE WAY!

NOW THEN... COME AT ME, MA CHAO!



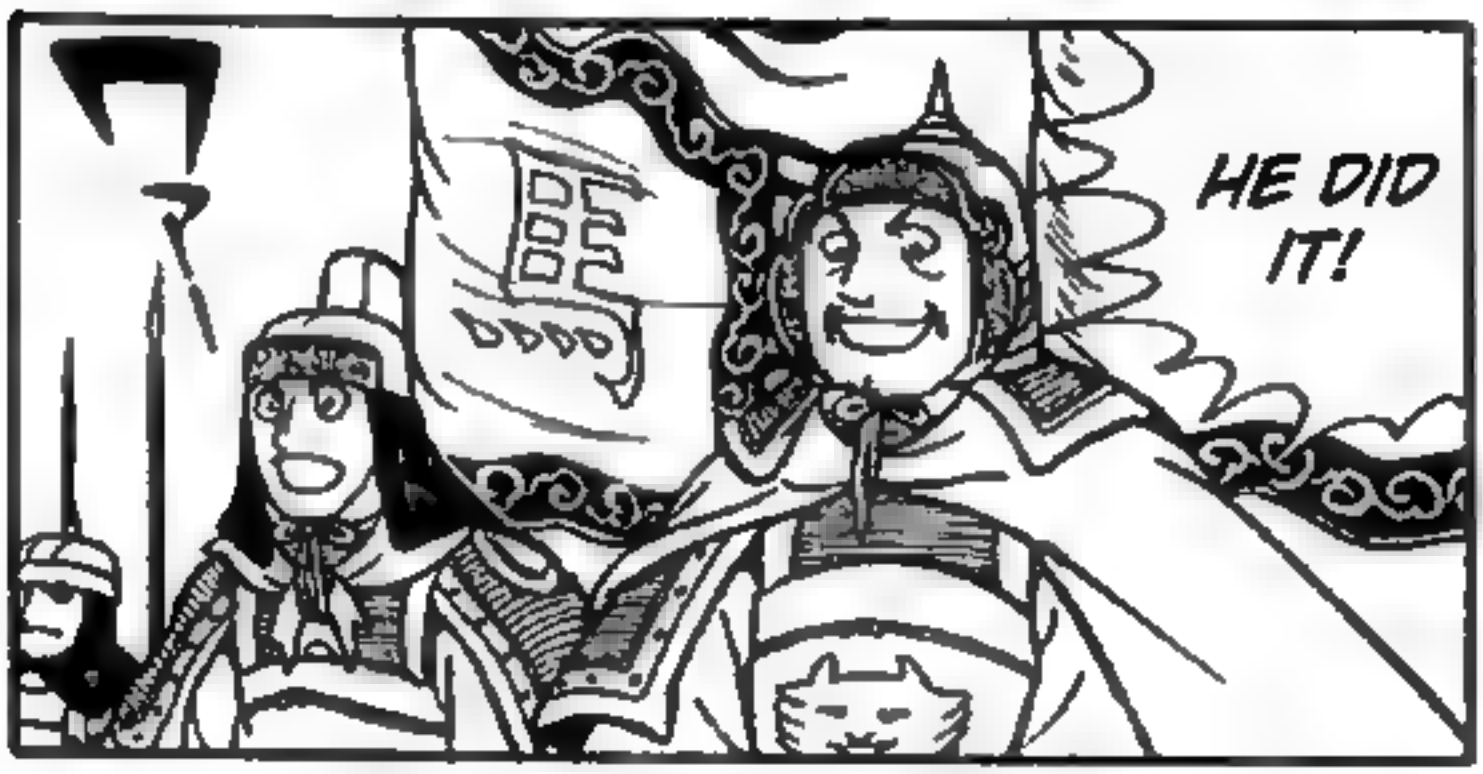


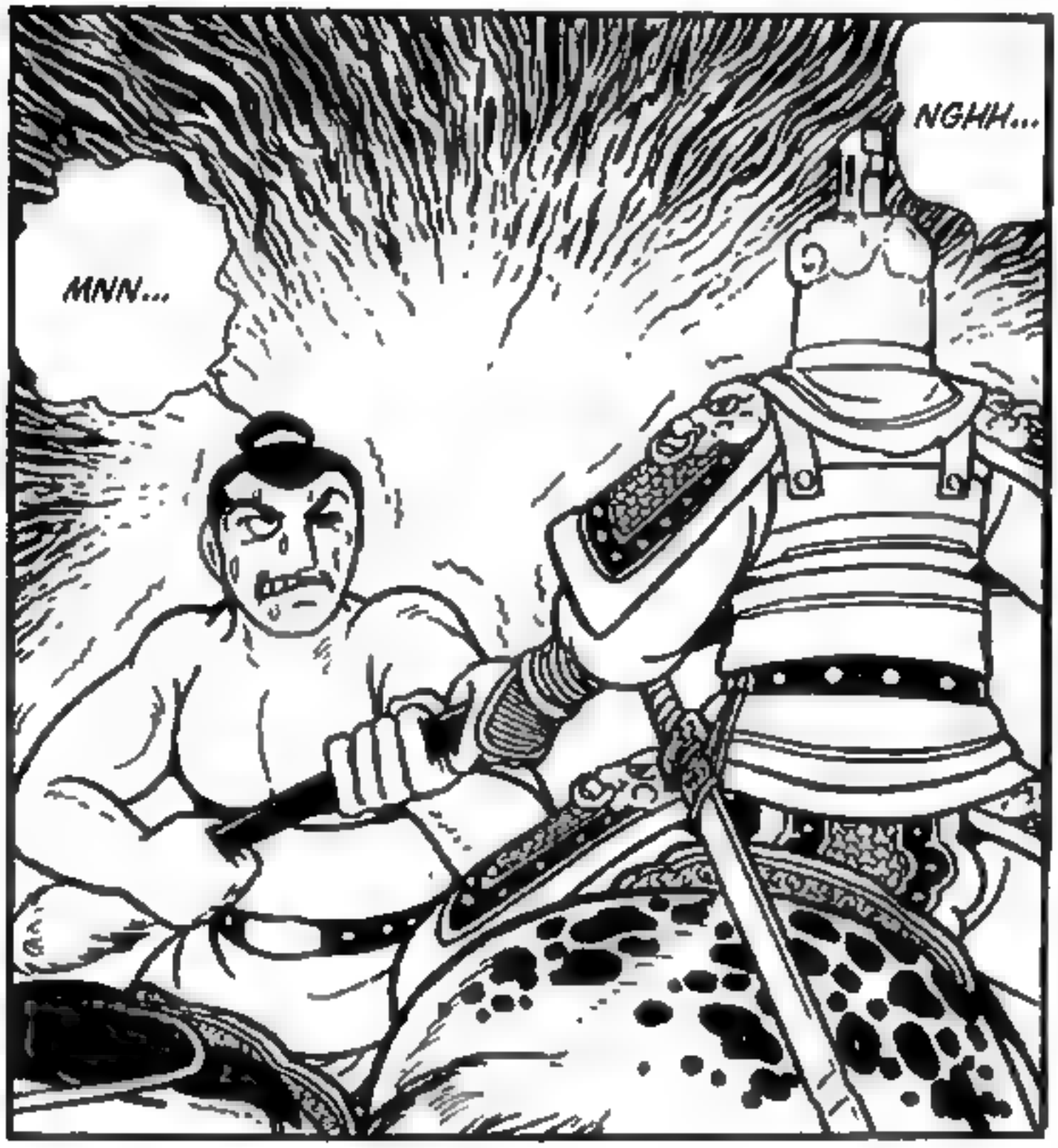


AHH!

AGHH!

GAHH!

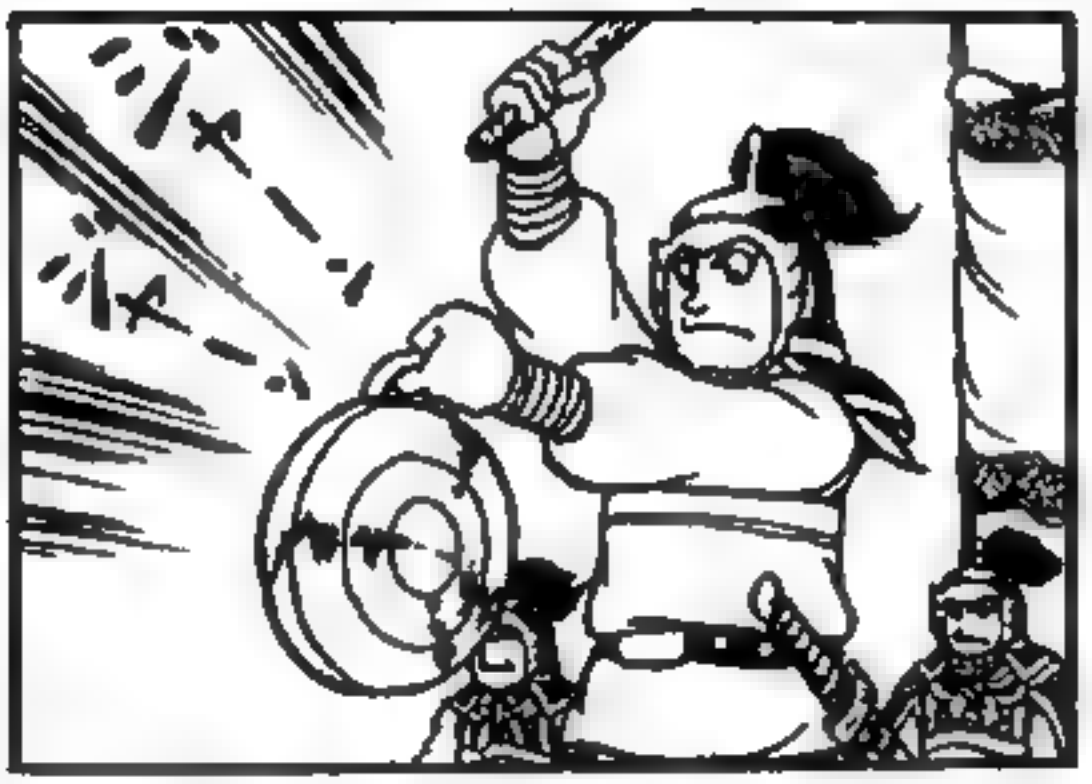

HE DID IT!

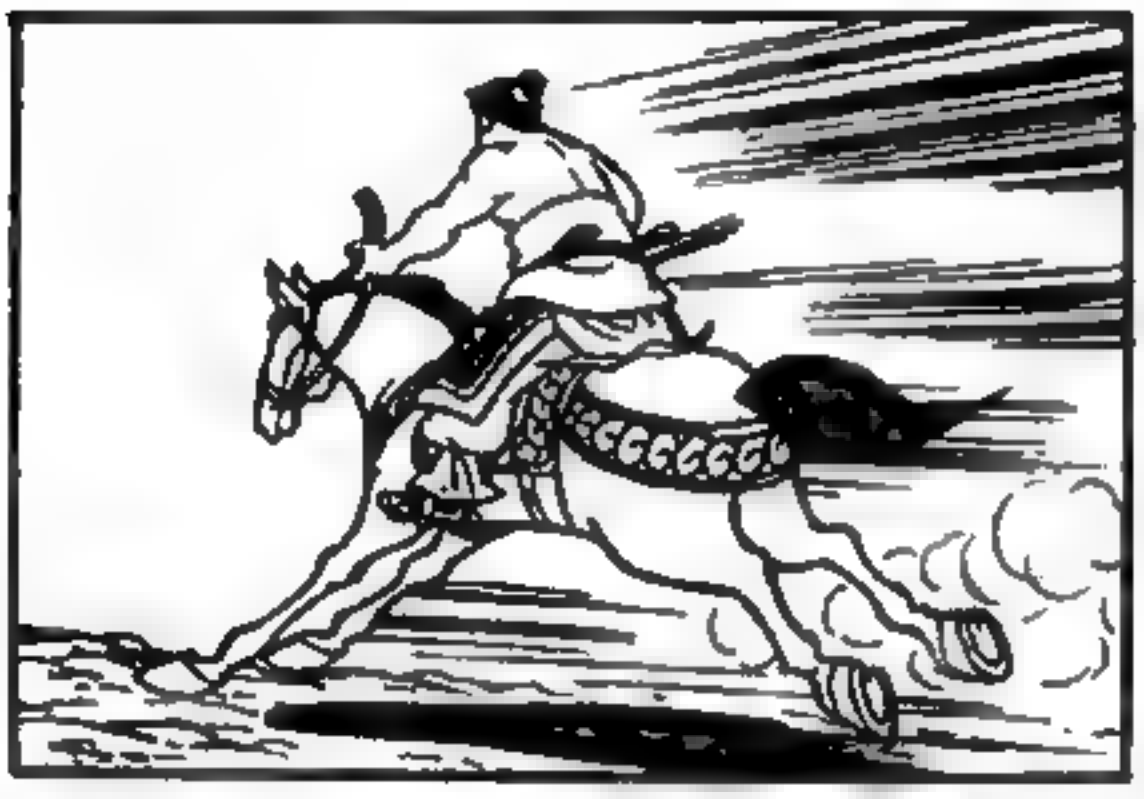

MNN...
NGHH...

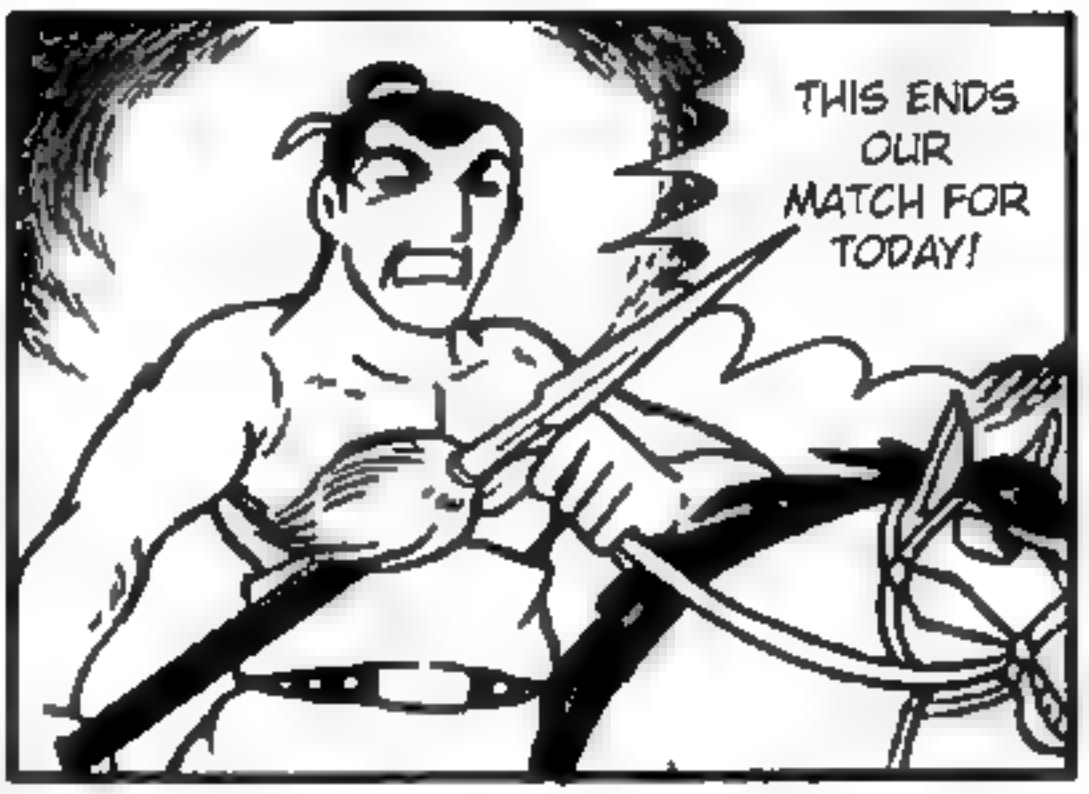
OHH!

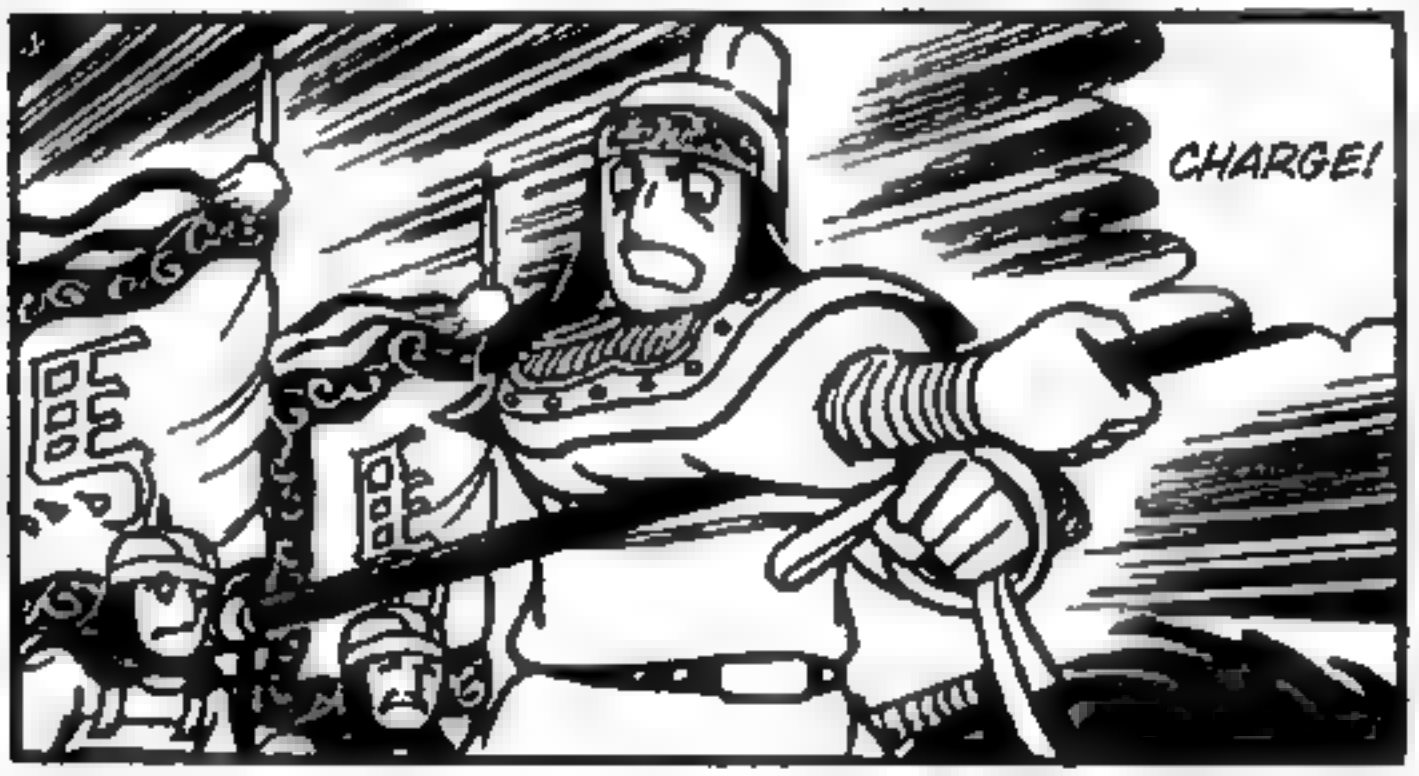
WHA!?

OHH!
HAHH!
THAT'S ENOUGH, THIS DUEL IS A TIE. CALL XU CHU BACK.

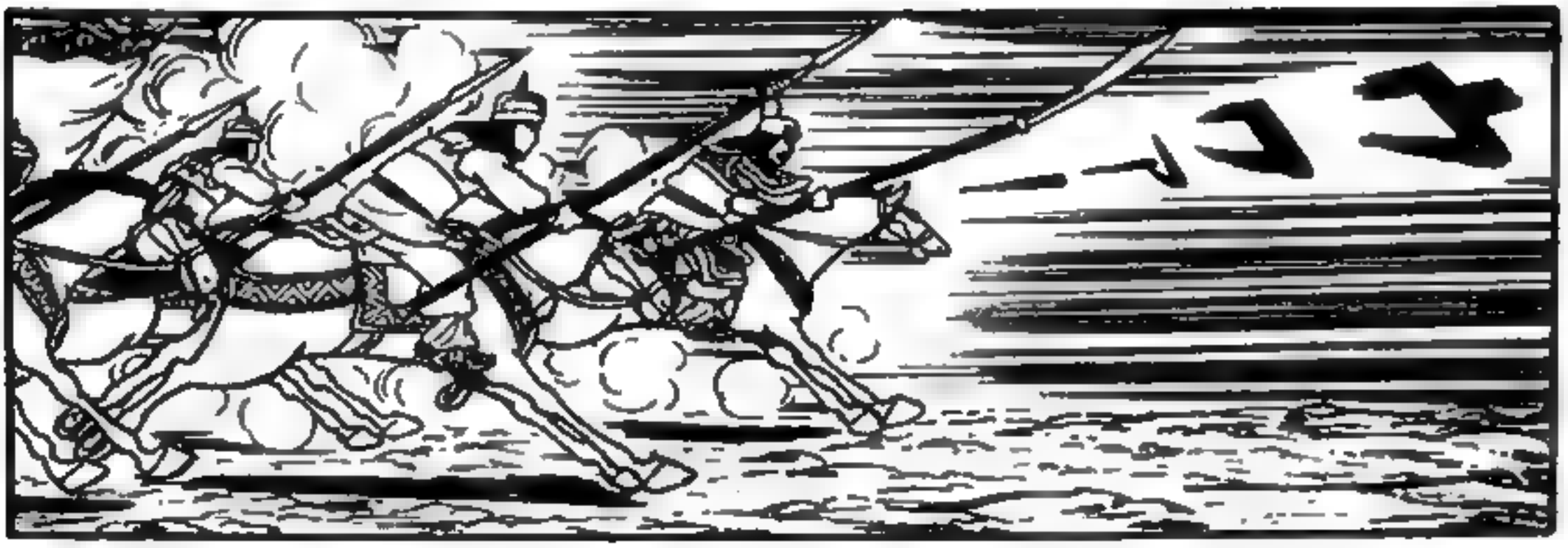





THIS ENDS OUR MATCH FOR TODAY!

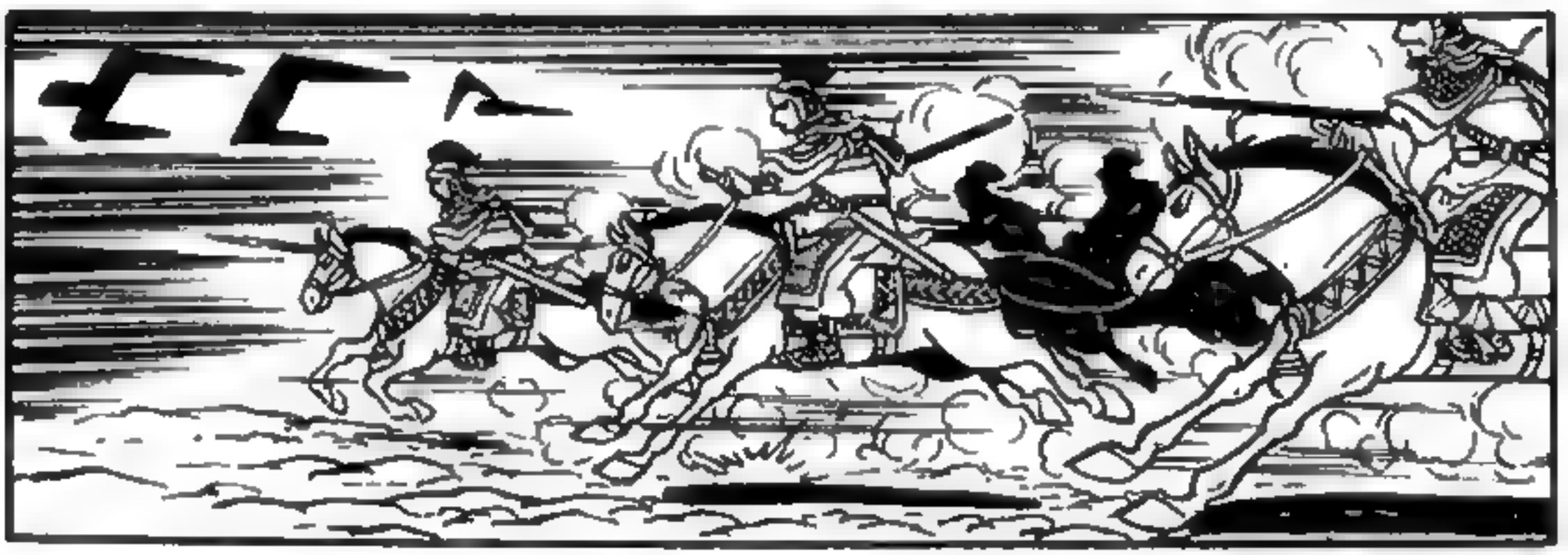

CHARGE!

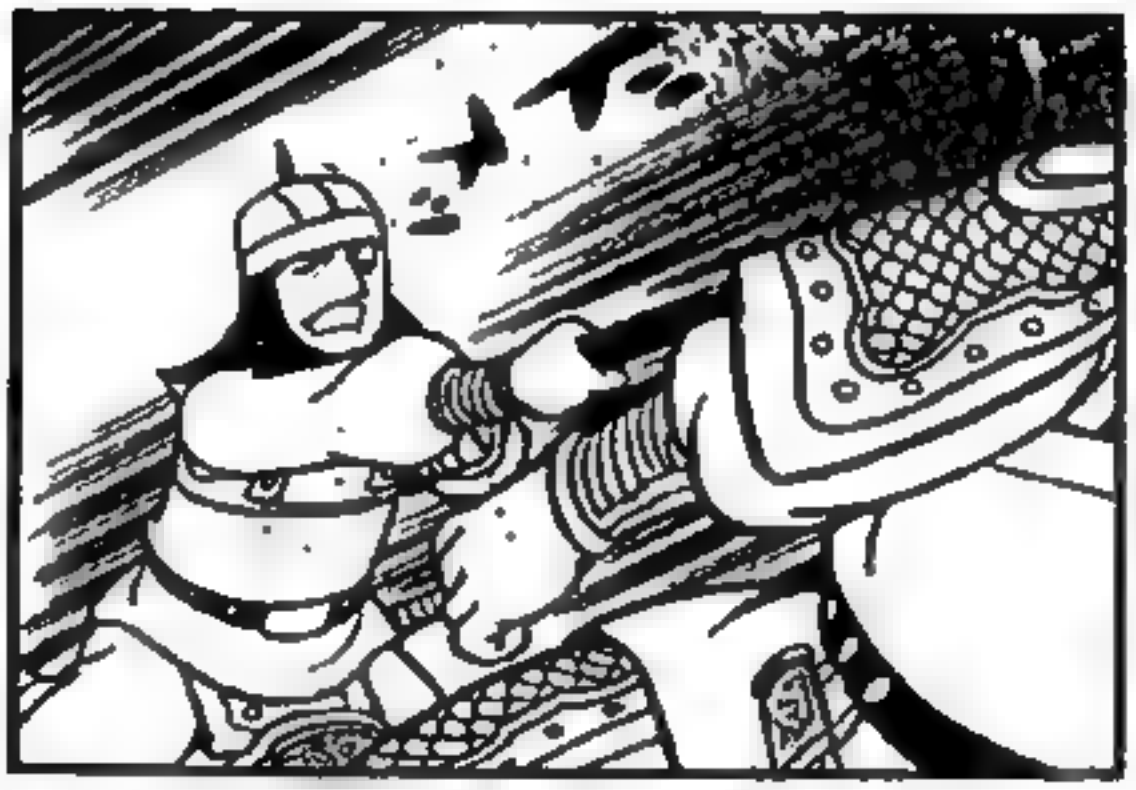
NOW'S OUR CHANCE!

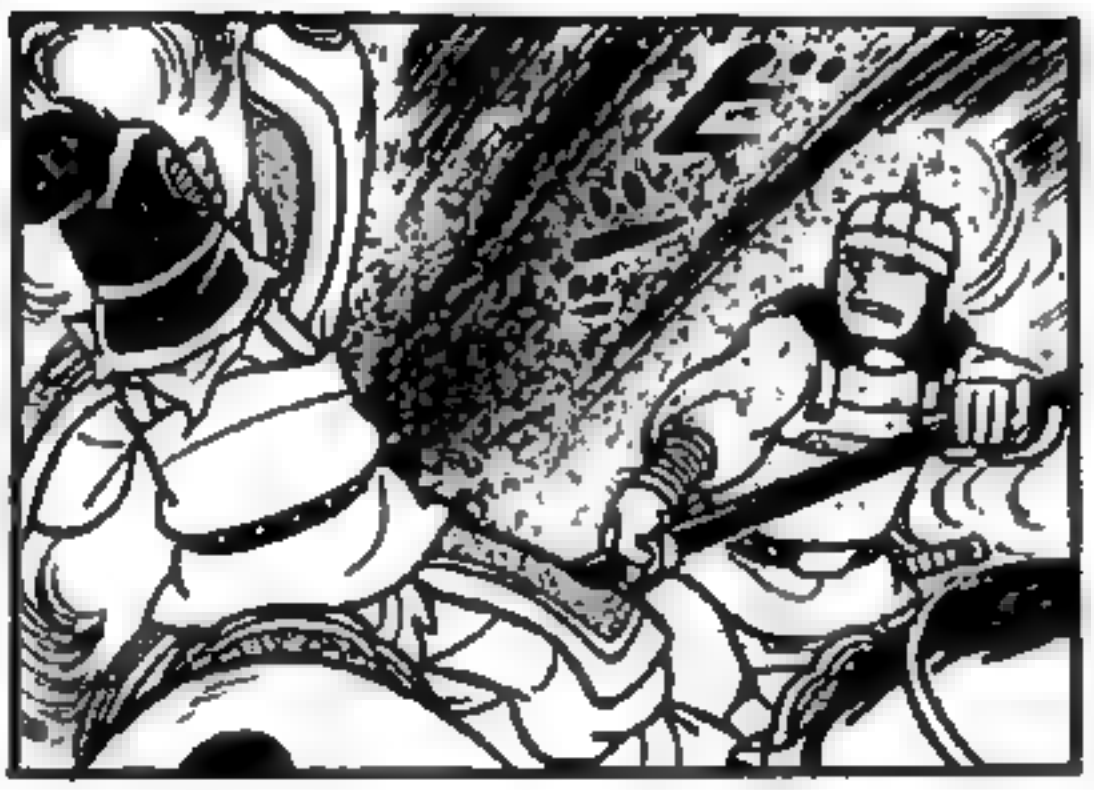


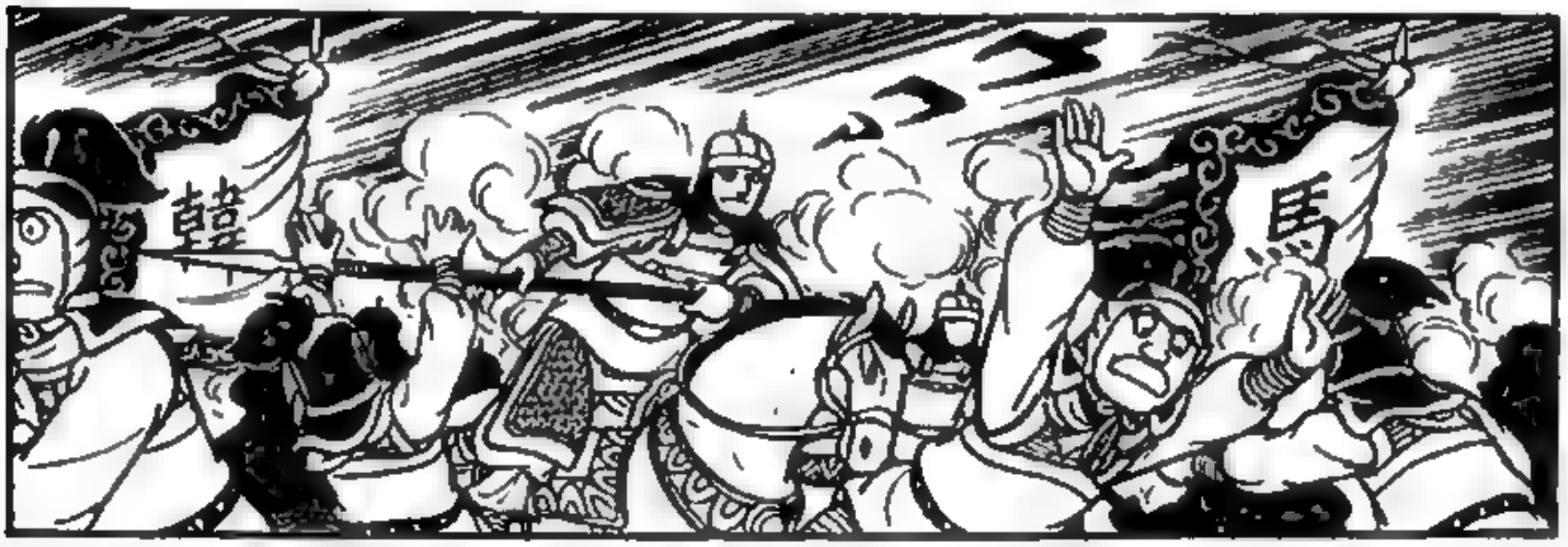
ATTACK!

AHH!



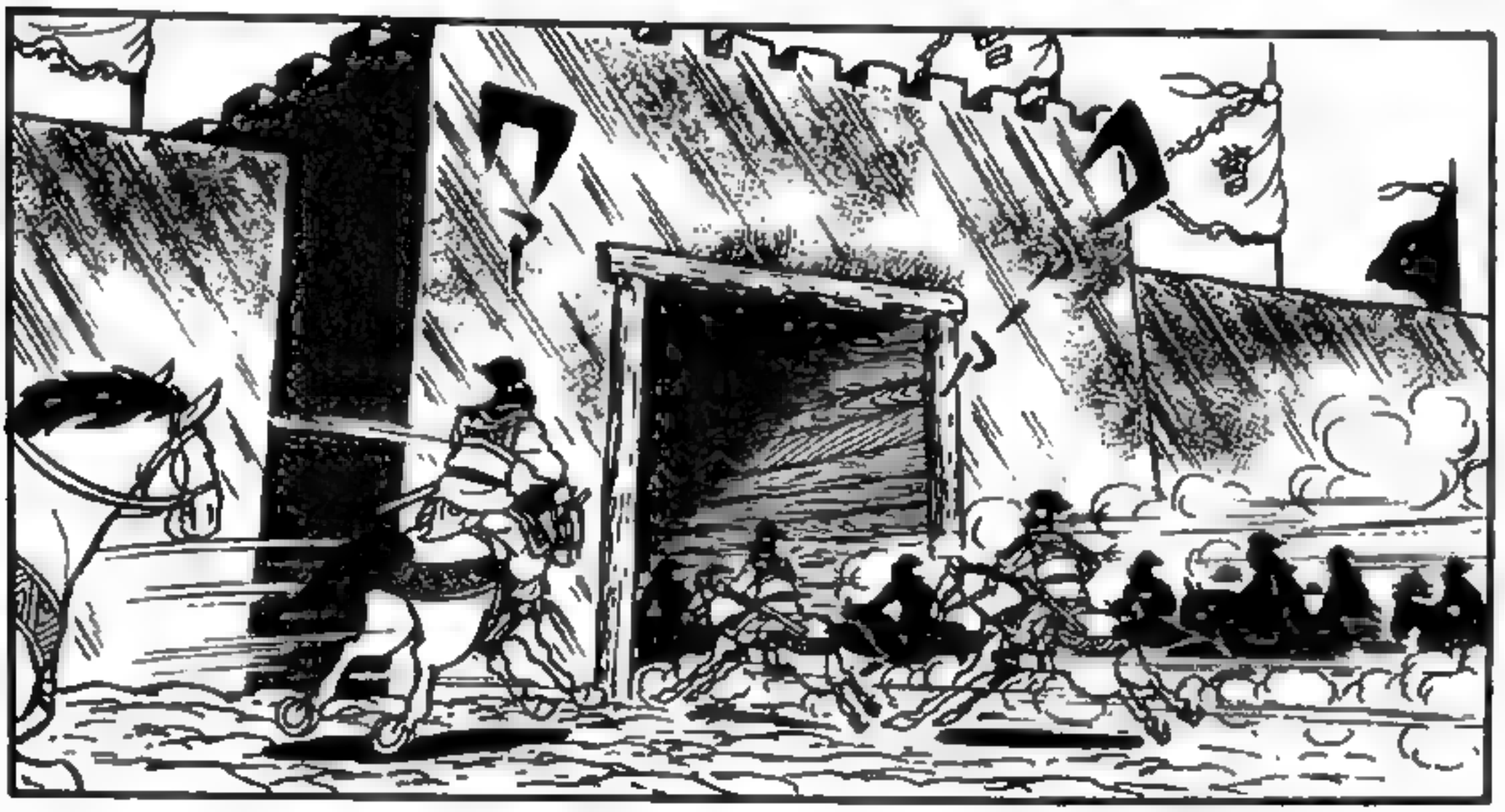





馬

RETREAT TO OUR FORT!

SIR, THE ENEMIES ARE GAINING THE UPPER HAND.



COME OUT, CAO CAO!

BUT REMEMBER THIS! YOU MIGHT FEEL SECURE IN YOUR FROZEN FORTRESS BUT THAT TOO WILL COME CRUMBLING DOWN IN THE SPRING!

FINE. IF YOU HAVE NO INTENTION ON FIGHTING, WE TOO WILL RETREAT FOR TODAY.

LET US RETURN TO OUR CAMPS!

RECONCILE

FOOLISHLY GOING OUT ON THE OFFENSIVE WITH NO SOUND PLAN WILL ONLY INCREASE OUR CASUALTIES.
I NEVER REALIZED MA CHAO WAS SUCH A MIGHTY WARRIOR.

DOES ANYONE HAVE ANY GOOD IDEAS?

BUT AT THE SAME TIME, WE CANNOT AFFORD TO REMAIN ON THE DEFENSIVE FOR TOO LONG, EITHER. AS MA CHAO SAID, OUR FORT WILL CRUMBLE WHEN THE ICE THAWS IN SPRING.

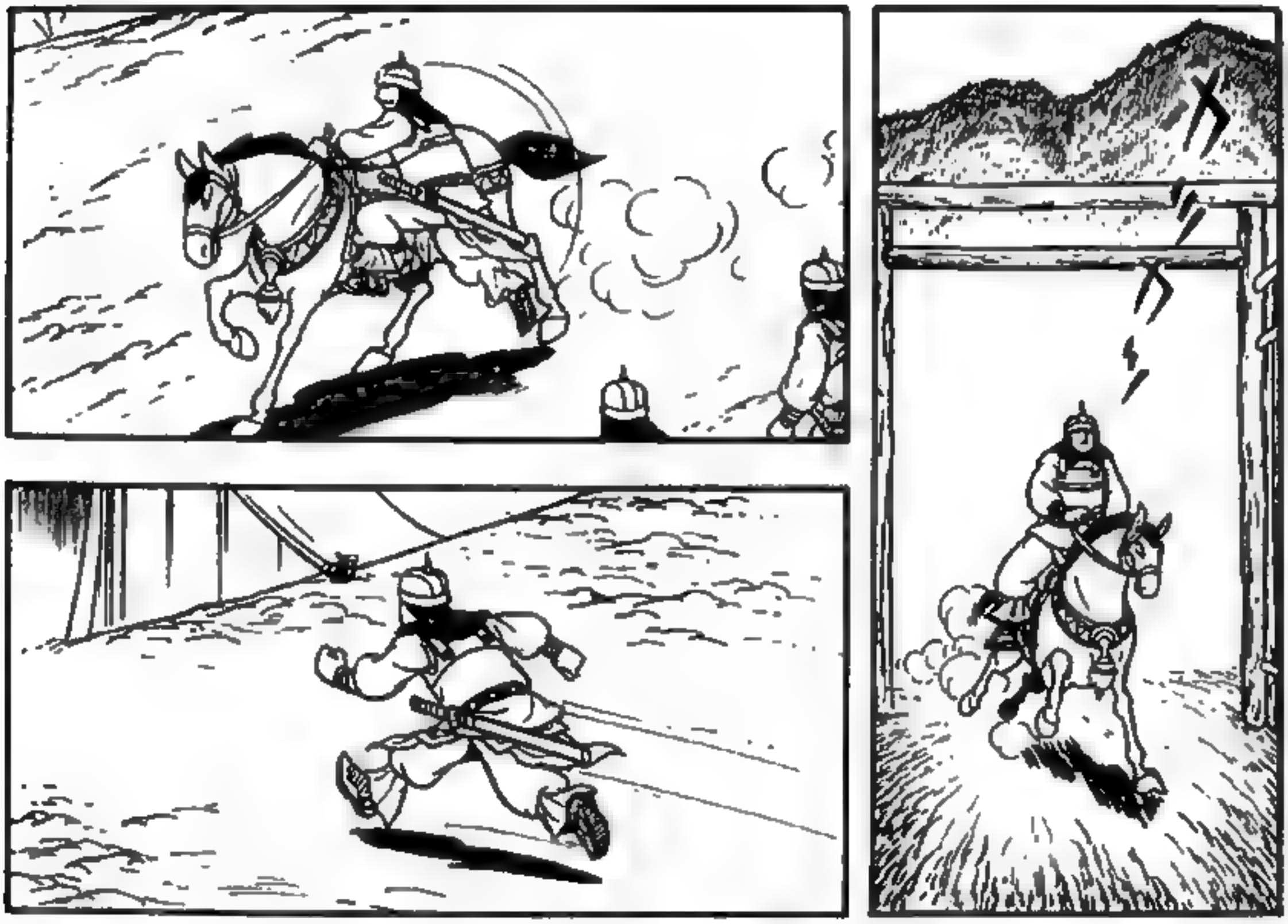
HMM...

WE SHOULD ATTEMPT ANOTHER COORDINATED ATTACK FROM THE FRONT AND REAR BY SENDING MORE SOLDIERS OVER TO XU HUANG AND ZHU LING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER.

YES, SIR.

FINE, BUILD SOME RAFTS AND SEND THEM ADDITIONAL REINFORCEMENTS.

AND SO, CAO CAO SECRETLY SENT OVER ANOTHER BATTLION ACROSS THE RIVER


WHAT IS IT?
EMER-GENCY REPORT, SIR!

WHAT!?

ANOTHER DIVISION OF CAO CAO'S ARMY HAS SET UP CAMP TO THE SOUTH OF THE RIVER!

SEVERAL THOUSAND, IF NOT TENS OF THOU-SANDS, SIR.

H-HOW MANY DO THEY NUMBER?

MA CHAO, THIS IS NO ORDINARY MATTER.

SO THE ENEMIES HAVE CROSSED THE RIVER AT LAST...

WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST WE DO, HAN SUI?

MNN...

WITH ENEMIES TO OUR FRONT AND REAR, NOT ONLY IS THERE THE MAJOR THREAT OF A COORDINATED ATTACK, BUT THEY CAN ALSO CUT OFF OUR SUPPLY LINES. AND A HUNGRY ARMY IN WINTERTIME IS AS GOOD AS DEAD.

WELL...

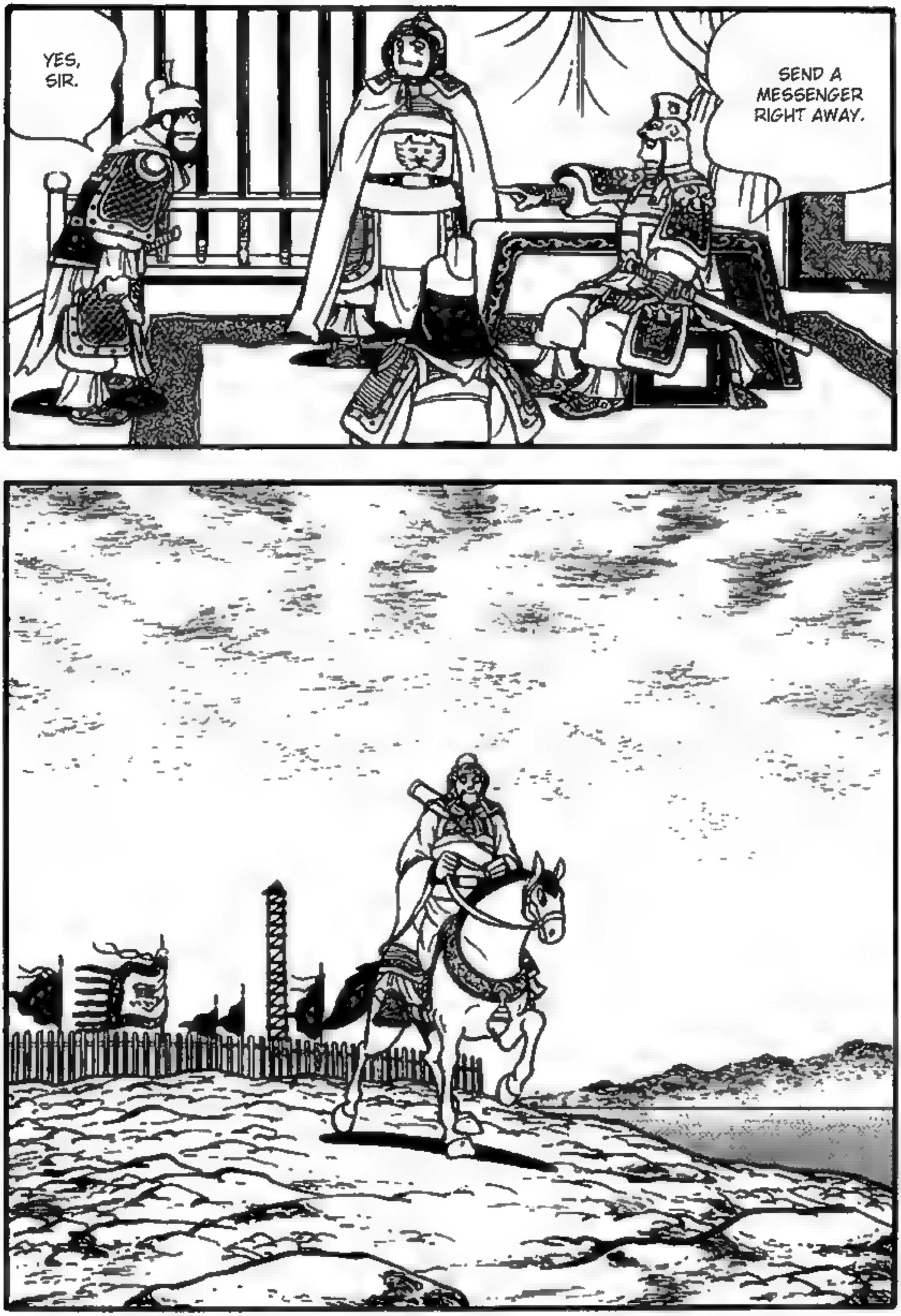
A TRUCE!? YOU WANT ME TO RECONCILE WITH THE DEMON WHO SLAUGHTERED MY FATHER AND BROTHERS!?

I'M AFRAID THERE'S NO OTHER OPTION BUT TO SEEK A TRUCE.

I SEE. SO WE'LL BUY SOME TIME WHILE WE PREPARE FOR OUR NEXT PUSH, IS THAT RIGHT?

AND I'M SURE CAO CAO TOO WILL BE HAPPY TO ACCEPT A TRUCE RIGHT NOW.

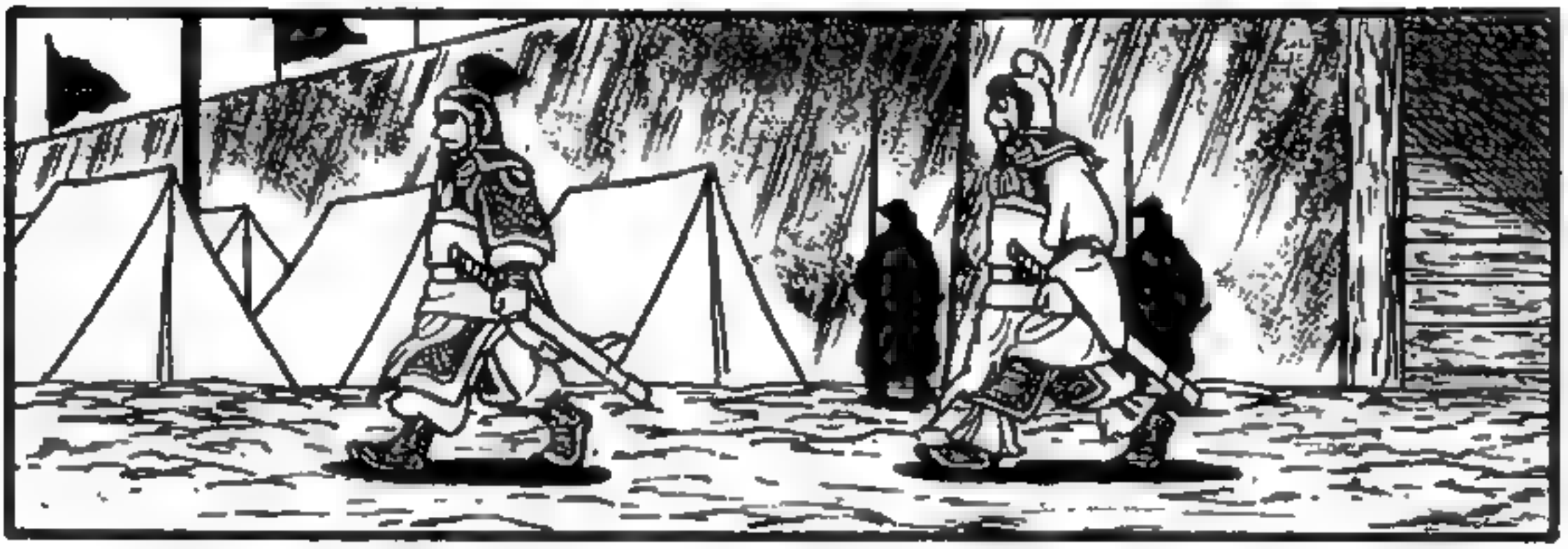
NO, DON'T MISUNDER-STAND ME NOW. THIS WILL ONLY BE A TEMPORARY TRUCE. ONCE SPRING COMES, WE'LL SEEK OTHER COURSES OF ACTION.


YES, SIR.
SEND A MESSENGER RIGHT AWAY.

SEND HIM IN.

YES, SIR.

A MESSENGER FROM THE ENEMIES?



I SEE.

I, YANG QIU, HAVE COME HERE TO DELIVER THIS MESSAGE FROM MA CHAO AND HAN SUI.

A RECONCILI-ATION?

I SHALL SEND MY REPLY AFTER DISCUSSING IT WITH MY OFFICERS.

I'M CONFIDENT THAT THEIR INTENTIONS ARE INSINCERE.

INSINCERE, YOU SAY?

WHAT A FORTUNATE TURN OF EVENTS! WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU GENTLEMEN THINK ABOUT IT?

HMM...

THE ENEMIES HAVE SO FAR COME OUT AS THE VICTOR IN OUR NUMEROUS ENGAGEMENTS. AND YET FOR THEM TO ACTIVELY SEEK A TRUCE CAN ONLY MEAN THEY ARE PLOTTING SOMETHING.

SINCE DECEIT IS THE LANGUAGE OF WAR, WE TOO SHOULD FALSELY CLAIM TO ACCEPT THEIR TRUCE.

AT OUR PRESENT CONDITION, A TEMPORARY TRUCE IS NOT A BAD IDEA.

THEN WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST, JIA XU?

THE ENEMIES HAVE SO FAR BEEN SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE BEHIND MA CHAO'S FEROCITY LIES HAN SUI'S WISDOM, AND VICE-VERSA.

IN THE MEANWHILE, WE MUST SEEK TO SOUR RELATIONS BETWEEN MA CHAO AND HAN SUI IN ORDER TO SPLIT THEM APART.

ALRIGHT, TELL THEM WE GLADLY ACCEPT THEIR TRUCE.

SPLIT THEM APART, EH...?

JUST AS I THOUGHT. WHAT ARE HIS TERMS?

IT SEEMS CAO CAO HAS DECIDED TO ACCEPT THE TRUCE.

BUT SINCE WE SUGGESTED THE TRUCE FIRST, IT WOULD LOOK SUSPICIOUS IF WE REFUSED NOW.

HA! A HARD BARGAINER HE IS.

HE PROMISES TO WITHDRAW FIRST IF WE TOO WILL THEN WITHDRAW FROM HIS CAPTURED TERRITORIES.

YES, HE IS THE MASTER OF LIES, AFTER ALL...

I SUPPOSE, BUT DO YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN BELIEVE HIS PROMISE OF WITHDRAWAL?

ON ONE DAY, I'LL MONITOR CAO CAO WHILE YOU'LL MONITOR XU HUANG. AND THE NEXT DAY, I'LL MONITOR XU HUANG AND YOU'LL MONITOR CAO CAO.

AHH, HOW ABOUT THIS? LET US TAKE TURNS MONITORING THE ENEMIES TO SEE IF THEY REALLY WILL WITHDRAW.

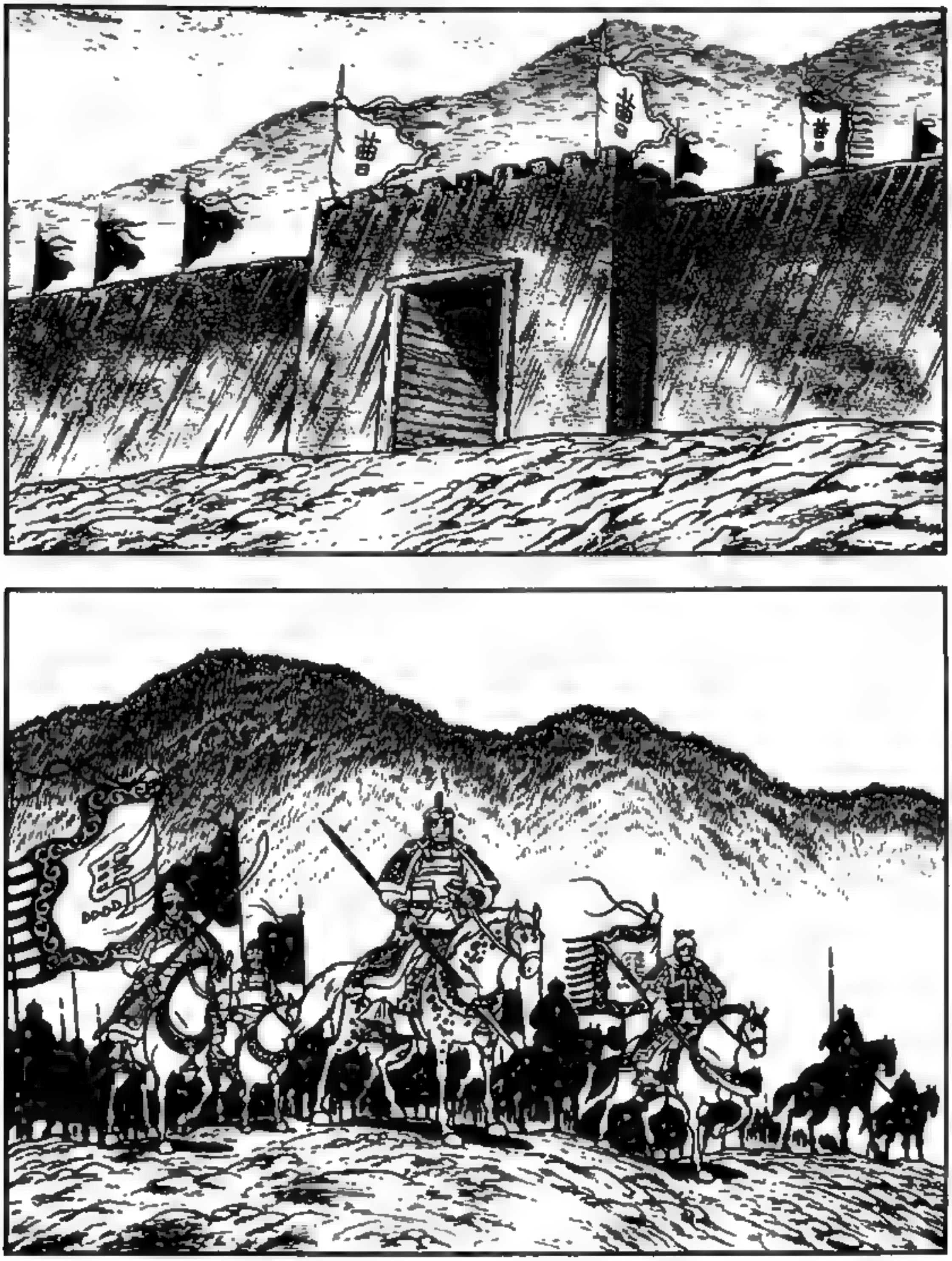
AH, SO WE CLOSELY OBSERVE THEM UNTIL THEY RETREAT?

WITH THE TWO OF US WATCHING THEM LIKE HAWKS, I'M SURE THEY WILL NOT HAVE THE CHANCE TO PULL ANY TRICKS.

THANK YOU, HAN SUI.

GOOD IDEA. LET'S DO SO AT ONCE.

ESTRANGEMENT



HE MUST DISTRUST ME.

CHANCELLOR, MA CHAO AND HIS TROOPS HAVE SHOWN UP IN FRONT OF OUR FORT TO CLOSELY OBSERVE US.

JIA XU!

ALRIGHT THEN, LET US PUT ON A SHOW FOR HIM BY PRETENDING TO PACK.

THEN THAT MEANS OUR PLAN IS WORKING.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MA CHAO ISN'T FOOLED BY OUR SHOW?

YES?

YEAH, BUT THEIR FLAGS ARE DIFFERENT. IT LOOKS LIKE GENERAL HAN SUI IS HERE TODAY.
THEY'RE HERE AGAIN TODAY.

THEY MUST BE TAKING TURNS IN OBSERVING US.

YES...

YES, SIR.

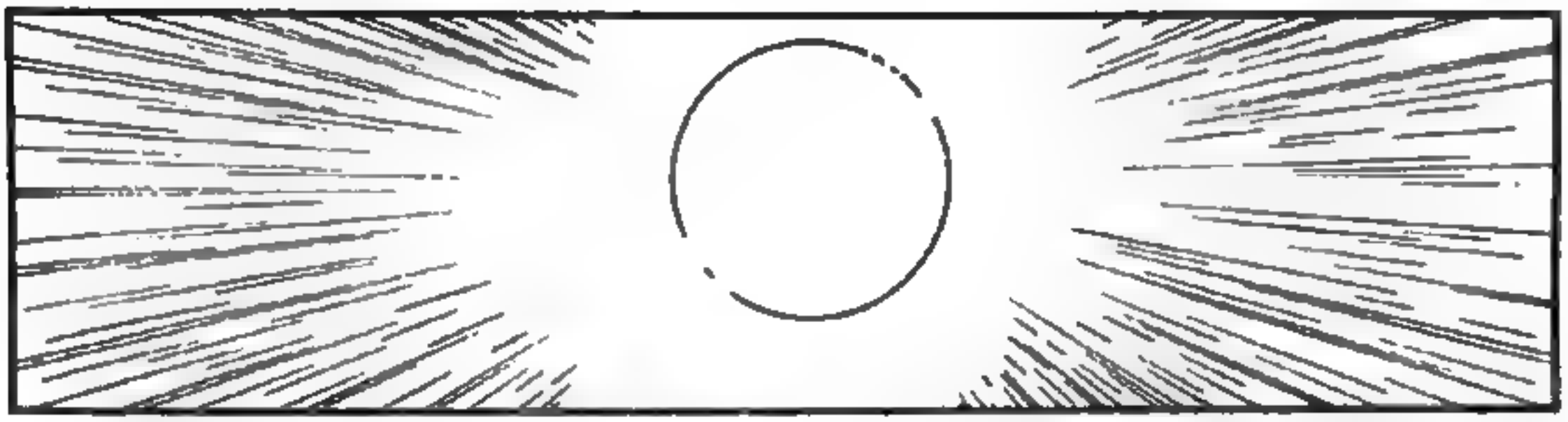
OH, SO HAN SUI IS HERE TODAY?

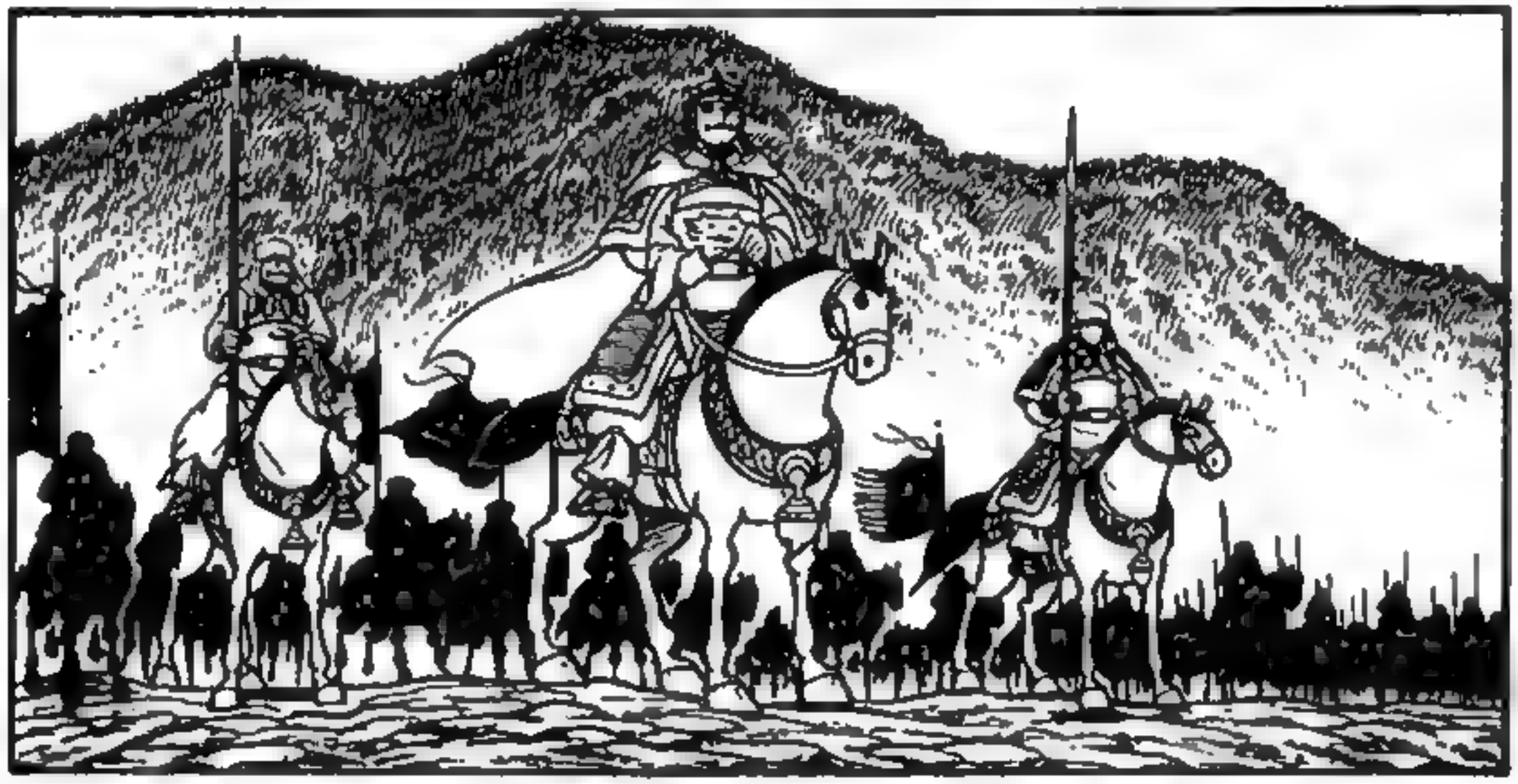
LET'S WAIT A FEW MORE DAYS BEFORE TAKING ACTION THEN.

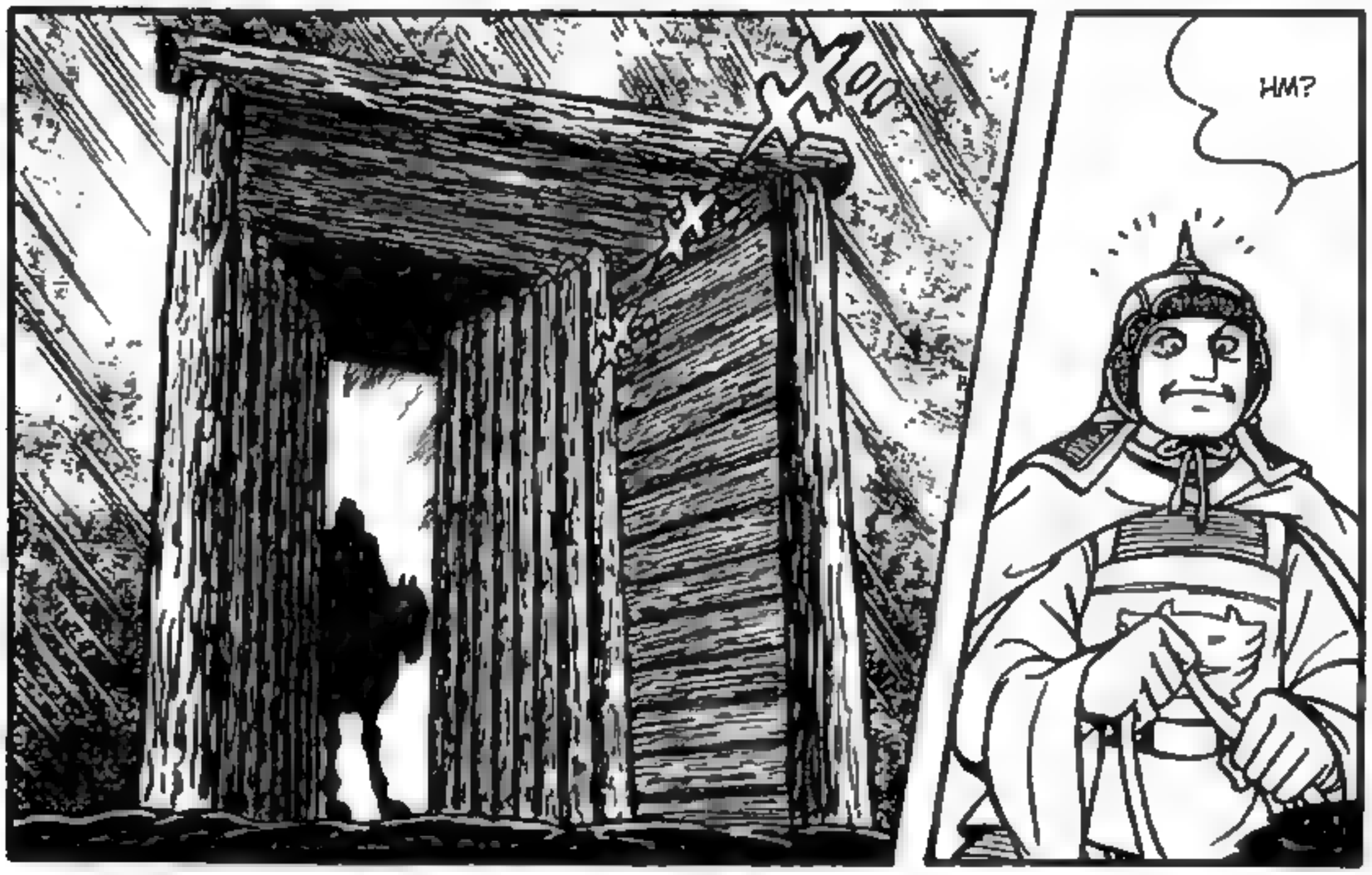
YES, SIR.

WE WILL MAKE OUR MOVE TOMORROW WHEN IT'S HAN SUI'S TURN.

WAKING UP EARLY TO OBSERVE US EVERY DAY... AREN'T THEY THE BUSY BEES?

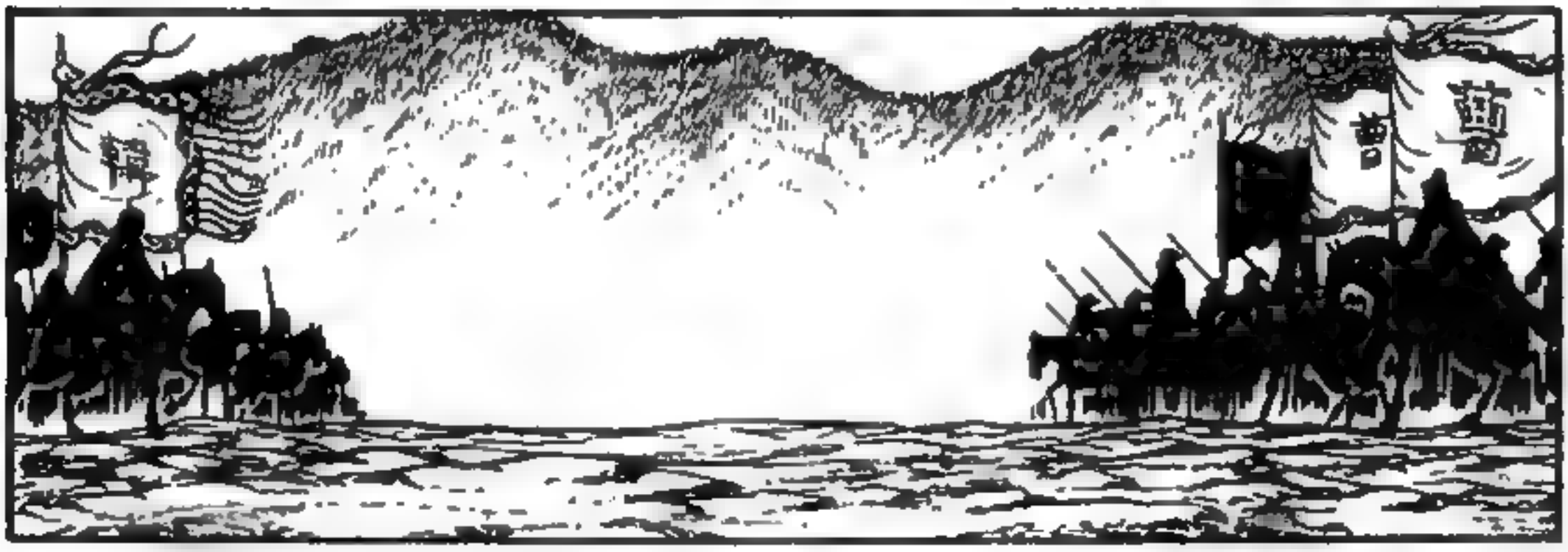


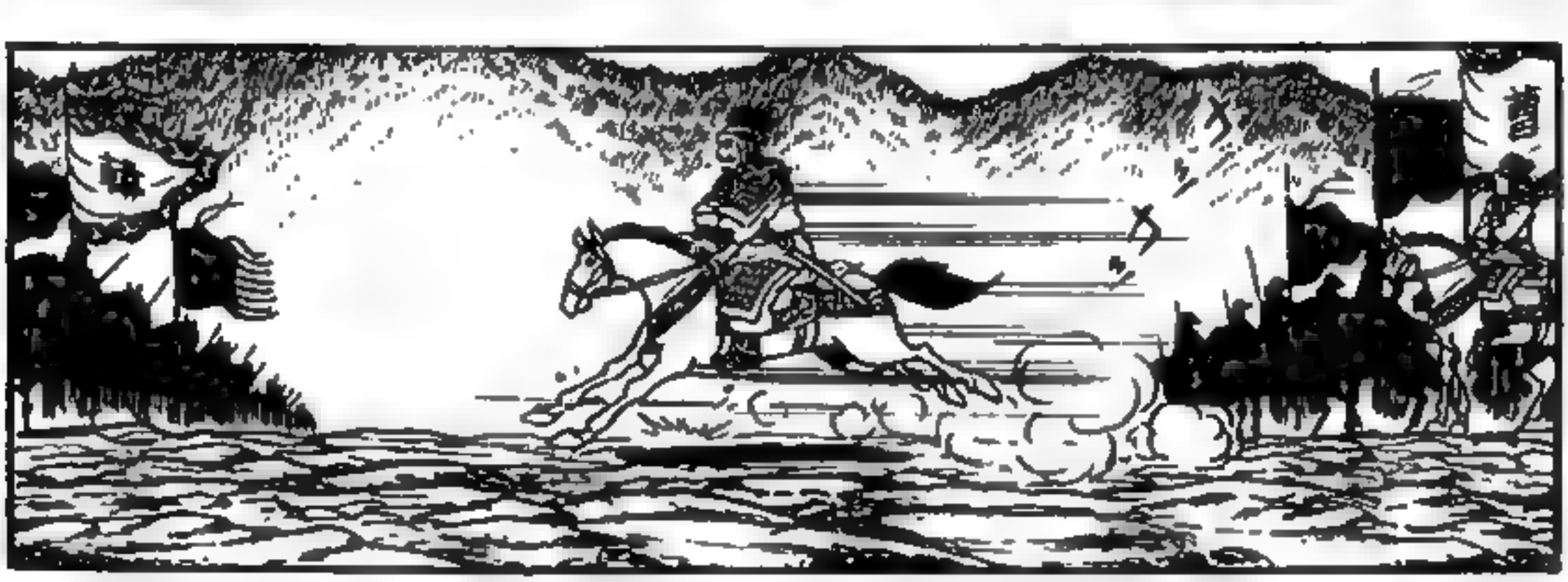


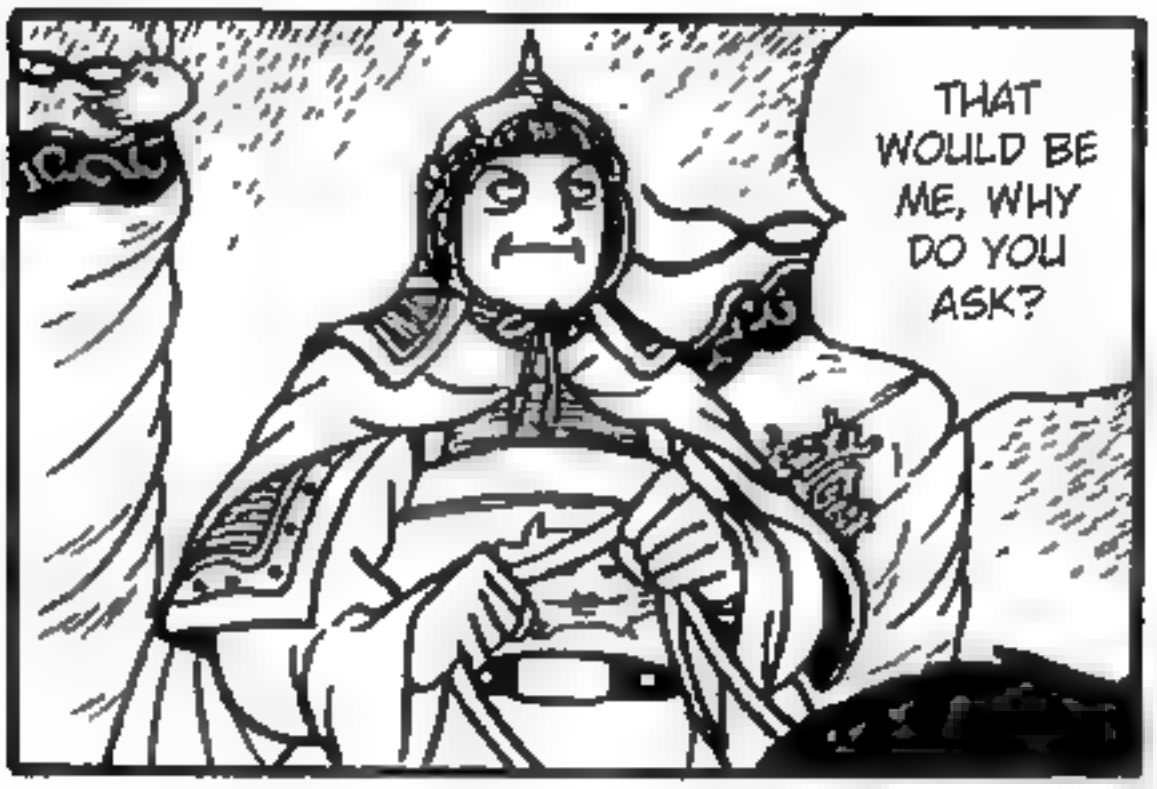

HM?

SIR, CAO CAO IS COMING OUT!

HM...

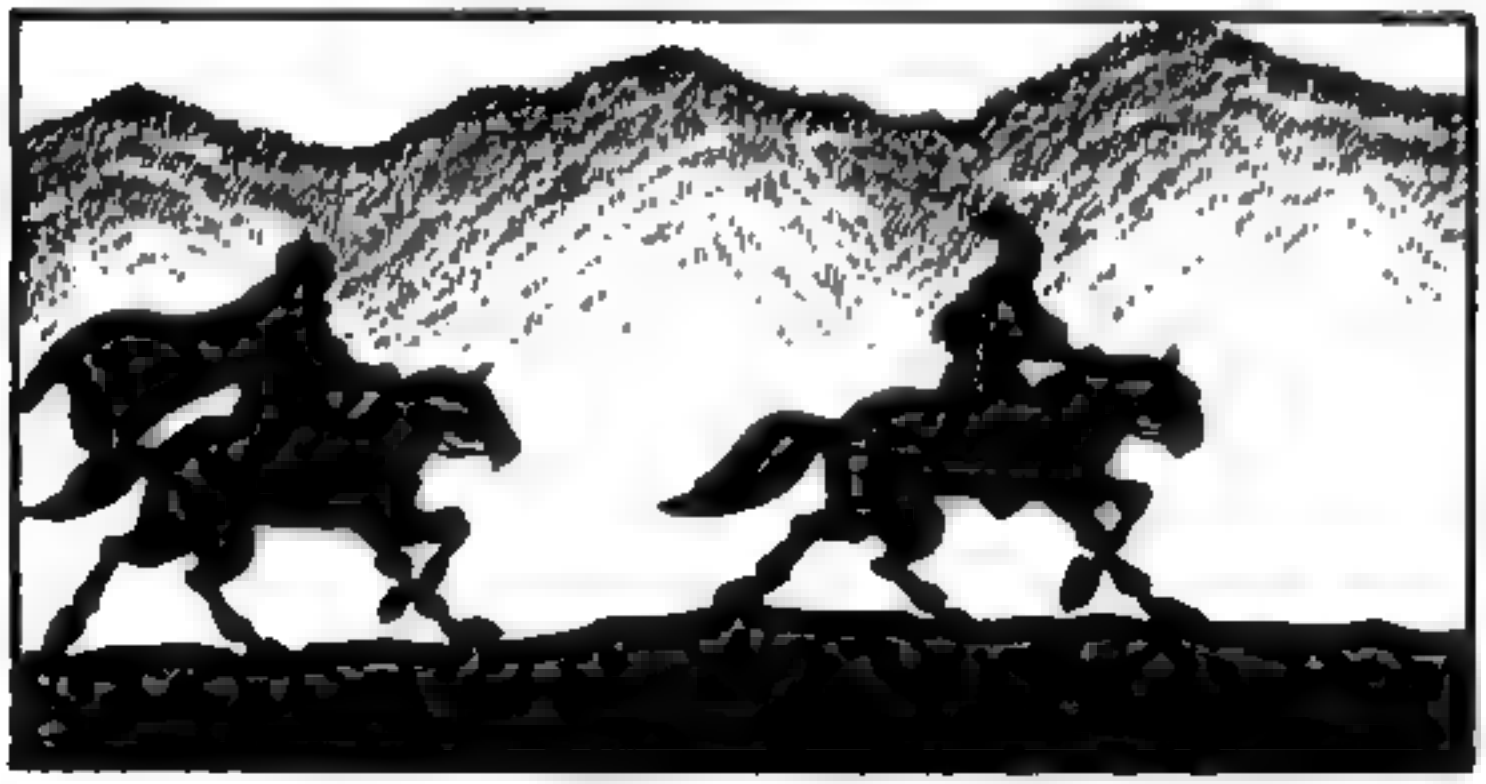




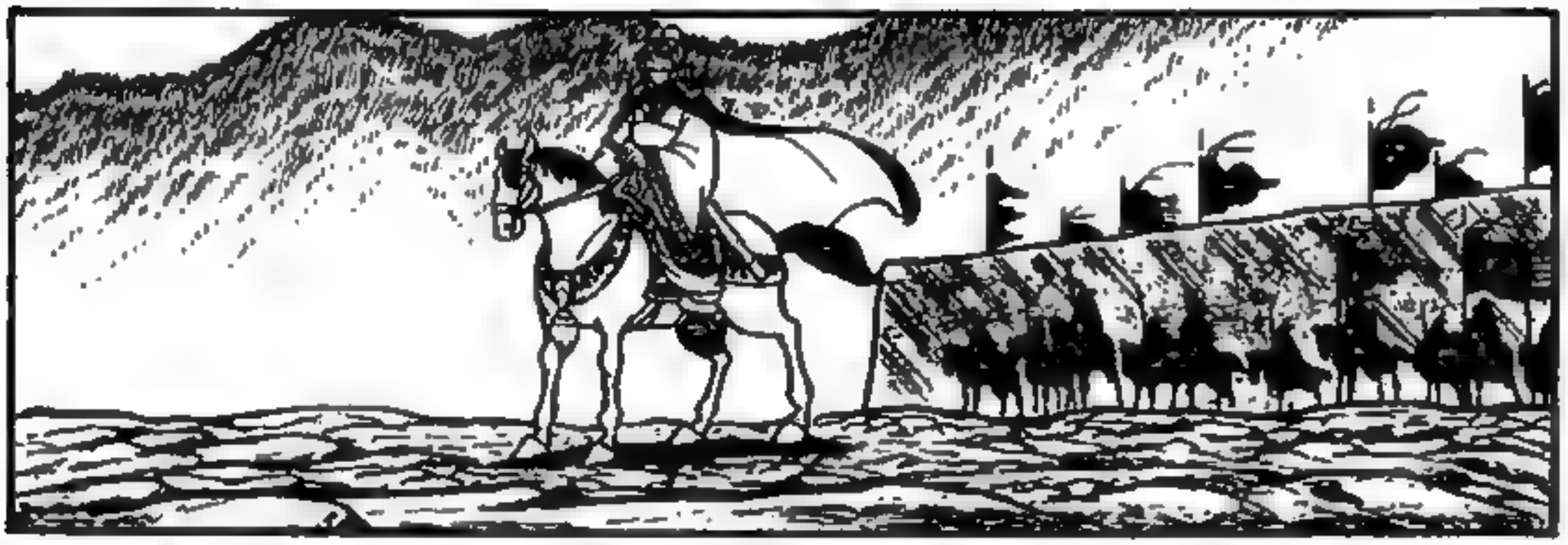

THAT WOULD BE ME, WHY DO YOU ASK?

IS GENERAL HAN SUI THERE!?

ALONE?
THE CHANCELLOR WISHES TO SPEAK WITH YOU AND YOU ALONE.



FINE.



GOOD DAY, HAN SUI. I AM CAO CAO.

I AM NOW 40 YEARS OF AGE.

YOUR FATHER WAS A GOOD ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE AND I RESPECTED HIM. THOSE WERE THE DAYS... HOW OLD MIGHT YOU BE NOW?

A LITTLE.

I WONDER IF YOU STILL REMEMBER THE TIME WE SPENT TOGETHER IN OUR YOUTH?

PERHAPS IF TRANQUILITY WERE RESTORED TO THE REALM ONCE MORE, YOU WILL COME JOIN ME FOR A DRINK AGAIN.

TO ME, IT SEEMS AS IF IT HAPPENED ONLY YESTERDAY AND YET, HERE WE ARE WITH OUR YOUTH WELL BEHIND US...

FAREWELL, THEN.

I CAME OUT HERE TODAY TO EXPRESS MY HOPES THAT OUR TRUCE WILL LAST A LONG TIME.

...?

WHAT ABOUT YOU GUYS?

NO, IT WAS THE SAME AS USUAL.

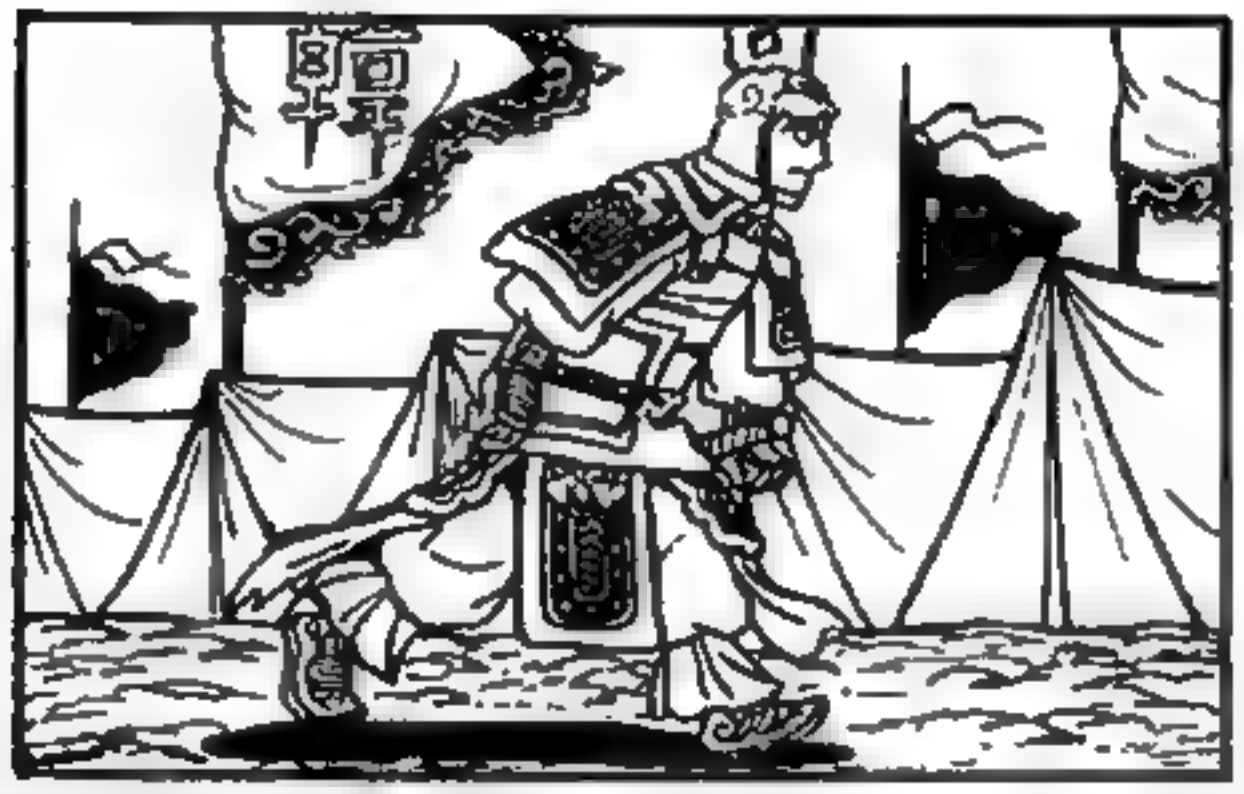
WELCOME BACK, SIR. HAS XU HUANG SHOWN ANY SUSPICIOUS MOVEMENTS?

THEY SPOKE PRIVATELY FOR SOME TIME AND THAT WAS IT.

AND?

HE DID?

ACTUALLY, CAO CAO CAME OUT TO TALK WITH HAN SUI TODAY.



CAO CAO WOULD NOT COME OUT FOR ANY ORDINARY MATTER...

YES, AND I HEAR YOU MET WITH CAO CAO TODAY.

YES, HE CAME OUT OF THE FORT TO HAVE A PRIVATE CHAT.

AH, SO YOU'VE RETURNED FOR THE DAY, HAVE YOU?
HAN SUI.

NOTHING MUCH, REALLY. JUST REMINISCING ABOUT THE OLD DAYS.
AND WHAT DID HE SPEAK WITH YOU ABOUT?

YES, HE TALKED ABOUT MY FATHER TOO.

HE CAME OUT JUST TO REMINISCE...?

SINCE HE DIDN'T BRING IT UP, I THOUGHT THERE WAS NO NEED FOR ME TO BRING IT UP EITHER.

SO YOU TWO DIDN'T TALK AT ALL ABOUT THE WAR?

.....

I SEE...

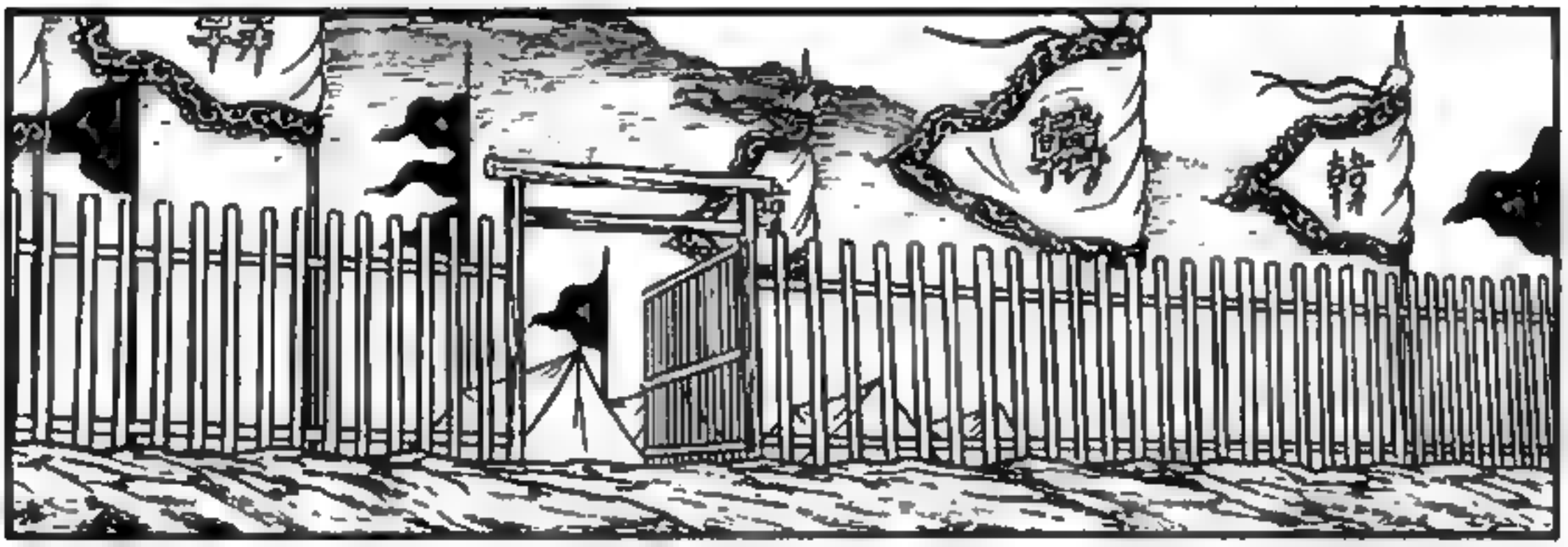
I INQUIRED, THINKING IT WAS AN IMPORTANT TALK BUT I GUESS I WAS WRONG.

HOW DO YOU THINK MY MEETING WITH HAN SUI TODAY WENT?

SPLENDIDLY, SIR. I'M SURE MA CHAO'S HEARD ALL ABOUT IT BY NOW.

MA CHAO'S A WARIROR KNOWN FOR HIS BRAWNS, NOT BRAIN. HE WILL BE HELPLESS AGAINST DECEPTIVE MIND TRICKS. THUS, I SUGGEST SIR TO WRITE A LETTER TO HAN SUI FULL OF VAGUE TERMS AND OTHER CRITICAL SECTIONS BLOTTED OUT.

OF COURSE, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU SEND MANY MEN TO DELIVER THIS LETTER TO INCREASE THE CHANCES OF MA CHAO FINDING OUT ABOUT IT. HE'LL THEN NATURALLY DEMAND TO SEE THE LETTER.
EXCELLENT IDEA. I SHALL DO SO AT ONCE.
ONCE HE SEES THE EXTREMELY VAGUE MESSAGE WITH KEY POINTS BLOTTED OUT, HE'LL THINK HAN SUI WAS THE ONE WHO DID IT TO CONCEAL THE TRUE MEANING OF THE LETTER. THEIR RELATIONSHIP WILL ONLY GROW FURTHER ESTRANGED FROM THIS POINT ON.



HALT!

WE ARE MESSEN-
GERS HERE TO
DELIVER THIS
LETTER TO HAN
SUI FROM THE
CHANCELLOR.

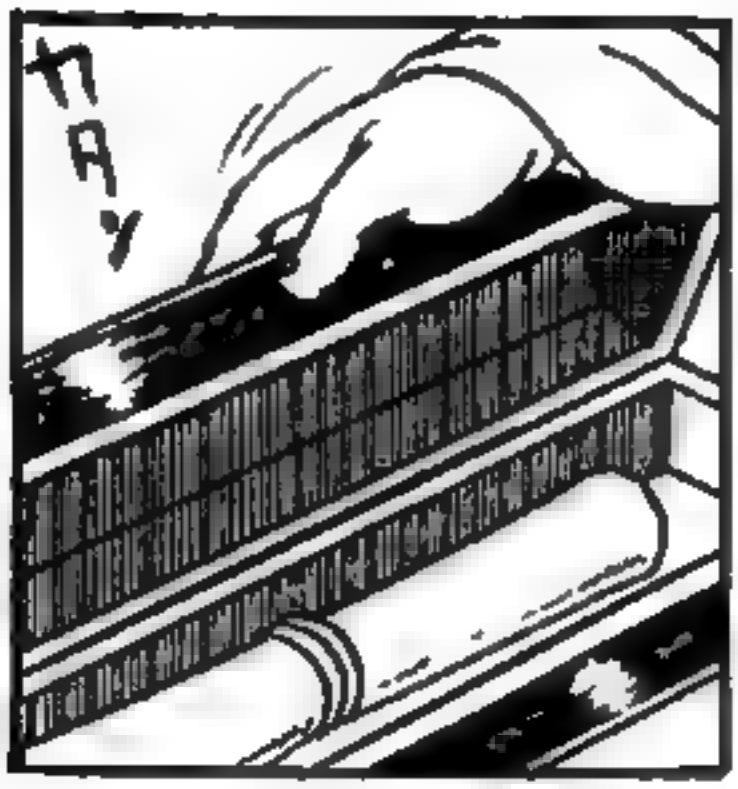
COME
THIS WAY.

HERE, SIR.

I BRING YOU THIS LETTER FROM CHANCELLOR CAO CAO.

EXCUSE ME, THEN.

韓
韓



I WONDER WHAT IT SAYS...?

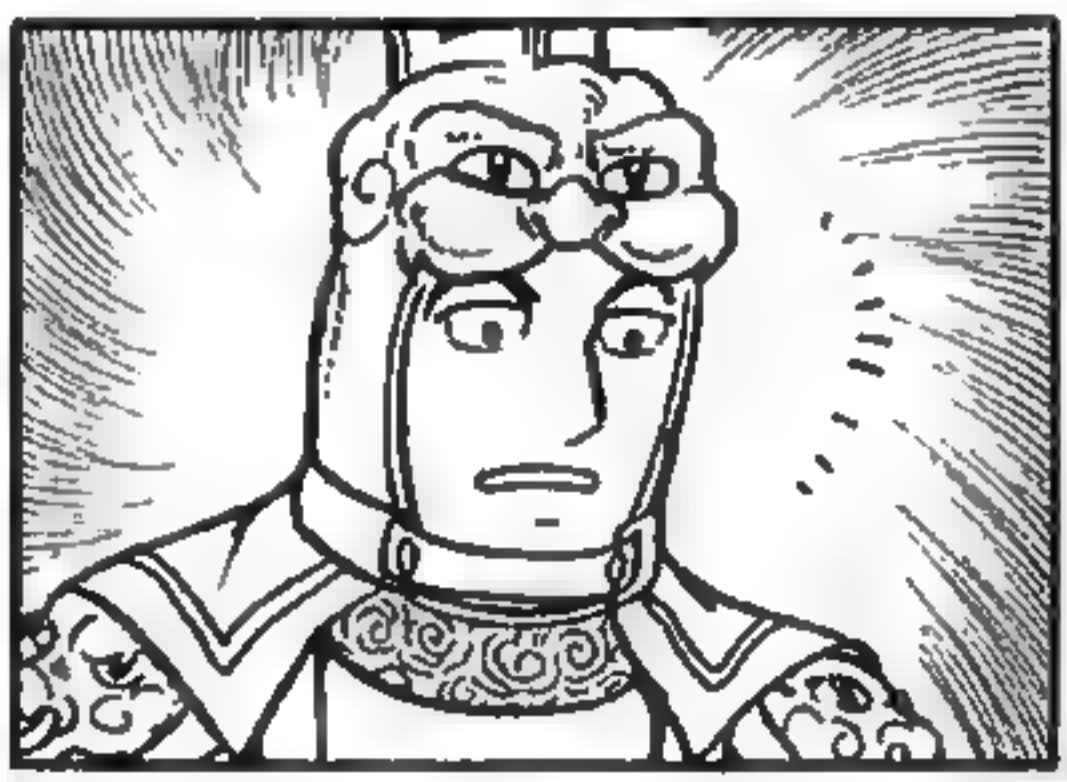
I CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO MAKE SENSE OF THIS...

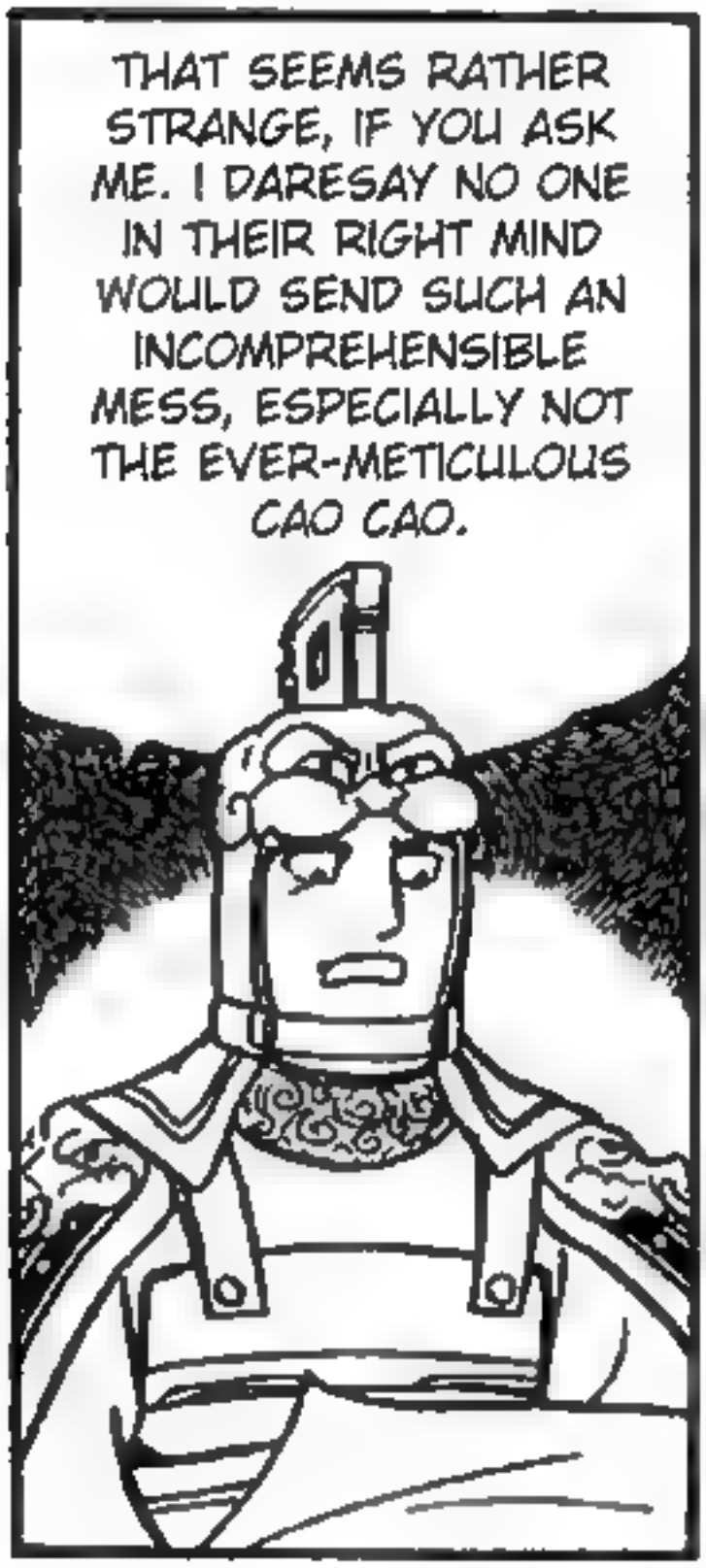
WHAT THE...?

GOOD EVENING, MA CHAO.
HAN SUI.

YES, HE BROUGHT ME THIS. CARE TO READ IT?

IT APPEARS CAO CAO'S MESSENGER DROPPED BY TO GIVE YOU A LETTER.




THAT SEEMS RATHER STRANGE, IF YOU ASK ME. I DARESAY NO ONE IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD SEND SUCH AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE MESS, ESPECIALLY NOT THE EVER-METICULOUS CAO CAO.

NO, THE LETTER WAS DELIVERED EXACTLY LIKE THAT. I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT AT ALL.
DID YOU BLOT OUT ALL THESE WORDS?

WHAT!? ARE YOU ACCUSING ME!?

IF ANYTHING, IT SEEMS MORE LIKELY THAT YOU WOULD DO THIS TO HIDE THE TRUE MEANING OF THIS LETTER...

SO YOU'RE DOUBTING ME...

I'M MERELY SAYING THAT YOU COME ACROSS AS VERY SUSPICIOUS, ESPECIALLY AFTER SHARING A PRIVATE CHAT WITH CAO CAO THE OTHER DAY.

VERY WELL, I SHALL PROVE MY INNO-CENCE.

SOUNDS GOOD.

TOMORROW, I WILL ASK CAO CAO TO COME OUT AND TALK WITH ME WHILE YOU HIDE AS AN ORDINARY SOLDIER BEHIND ME. WHEN YOU SEE AN OPENING, COME OUT AND KILL HIM ON THE SPOT.

WAIT JUST A MOMENT.

GENERAL HAN SUI WISHES TO SPEAK WITH THE CHANCELLOR!

OH?

HAN SUI IS IN FRONT OF THE GATES, WISHING TO SPEAK WITH YOU, CHANCELLOR.

CAO HONG.

YES.

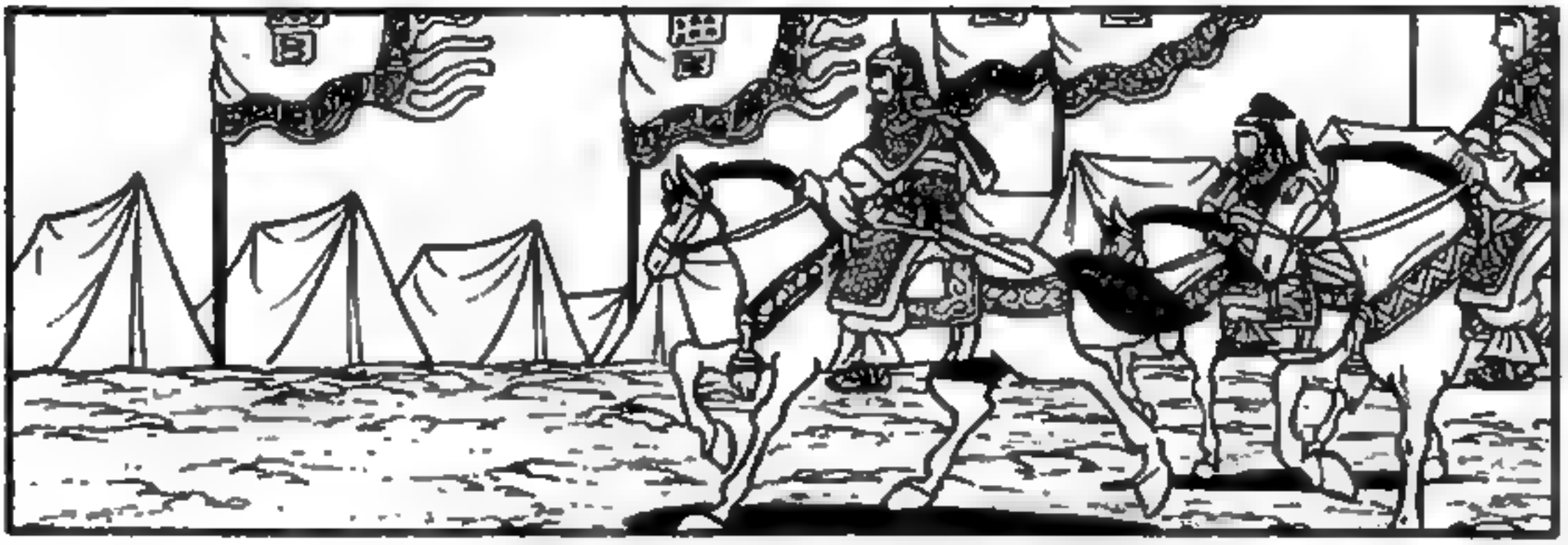
THINGS ARE GOING JUST AS PLANNED, JIA XU.

YES, SIR.

I WANT YOU TO...

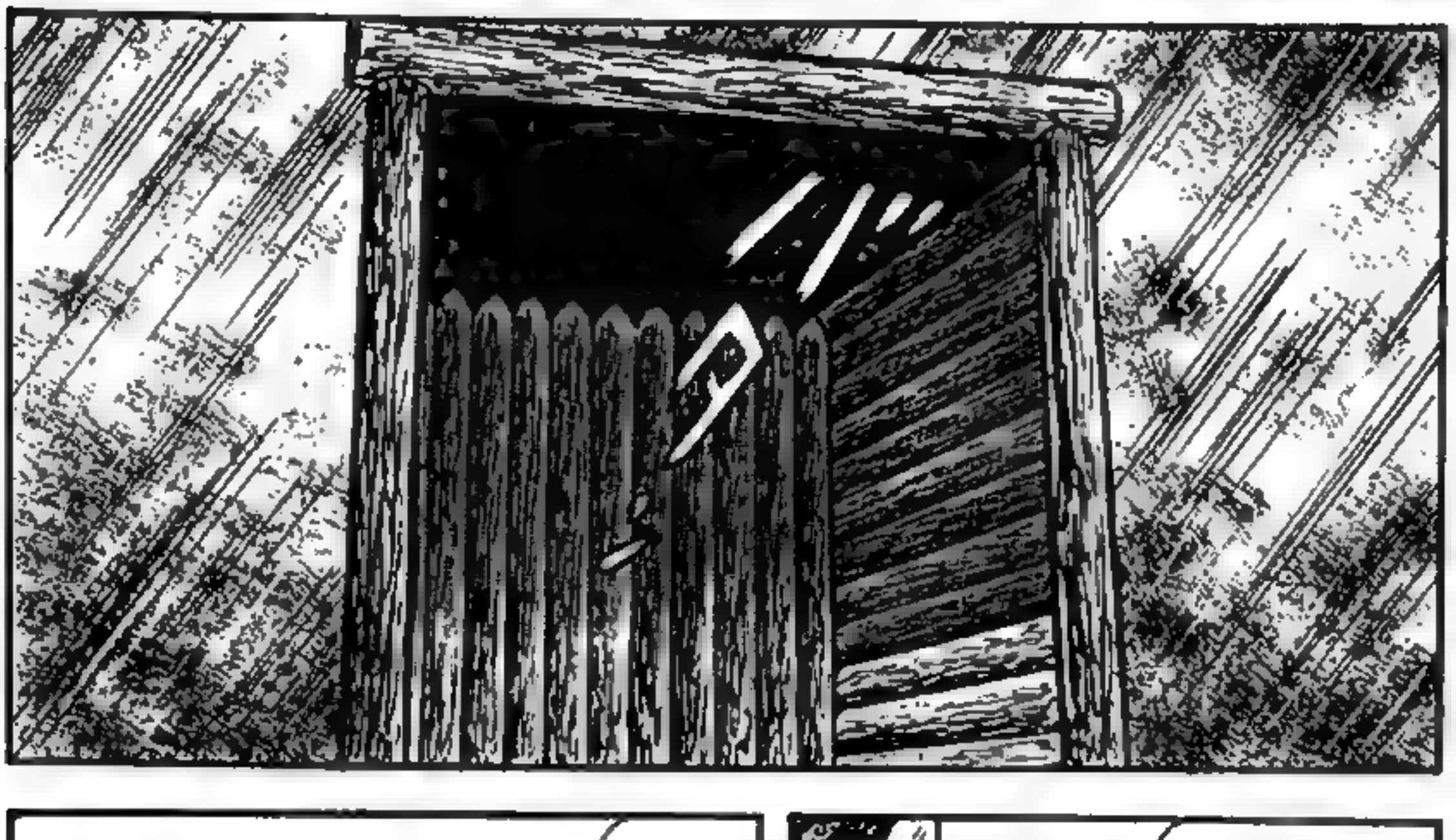
WHISPER WHISPER

YES?



HAN SUI! THE CHANCELLOR WAS MOST PLEASED BY YOUR PROMISE LAST NIGHT. LET THERE BE NO SLIPUP.

EXCUSE ME, THEN.



YOU...

SO HAN SUI DID SECRETLY MAKE SOME SORT OF PROMISE!

YOU TREACH-EROUS LIAR!

THIS IS ALL A MISUNDER-STANDING!

LET GO OF ME!
SIR, PLEASE WAIT!

YES...
GENERAL HAN SUI, I ADVISE YOU TO WITHDRAW BACK TO BASE. WE SHALL TRY TO CALM MA CHAO DOWN.

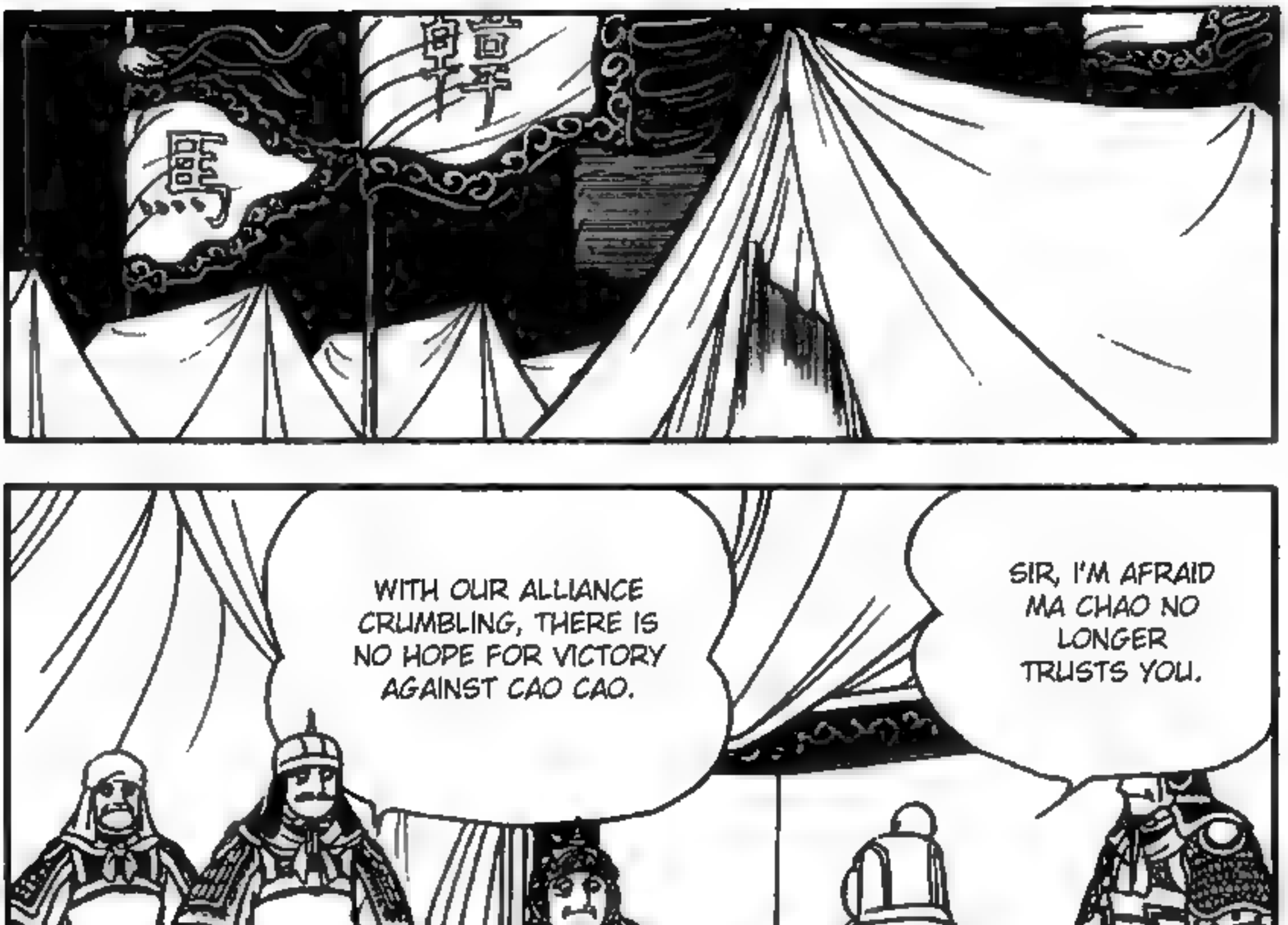
PLEASE CALM DOWN, SIR. GENERAL HAN SUI IS NOT LYING.

COME BACK, YOU LYING SELL-OUT!

FINE, I'LL LET HIM GO FOR TODAY AS YOU MEN SUGGEST.

YOU MUST RECONSIDER THE FACTS BEFORE ACTING RASHLY, SIR.

BUT AS SOON AS I SEE CLEAR EVIDENCE OF HAN SUI'S BETRAYAL, I WILL KILL HIM WITH MY OWN TWO HANDS!


WITH OUR ALLIANCE CRUMBLING, THERE IS NO HOPE FOR VICTORY AGAINST CAO CAO.
SIR, I'M AFRAID MA CHAO NO LONGER TRUSTS YOU.
BUT I AND MA CHAO'S FATHER WERE SWORN-BROTHERS... HE'S ALMOST LIKE A SON TO ME.
I BELIEVE SWITCHING ALLEGIANCE TO CAO CAO WILL BE THE SAFEST AND SUREST WAY TO PROTECT YOUR HOLDINGS AND FAMILY, MY LORD.

EXACTLY! WHO KNOWS JUST WHEN HE'LL TURN ON US!?

YOU MAY THINK OF HIM AS A SON, BUT HE THINKS OF YOU AS A TRAITOR-OUS SCUM.

PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT.

HM...

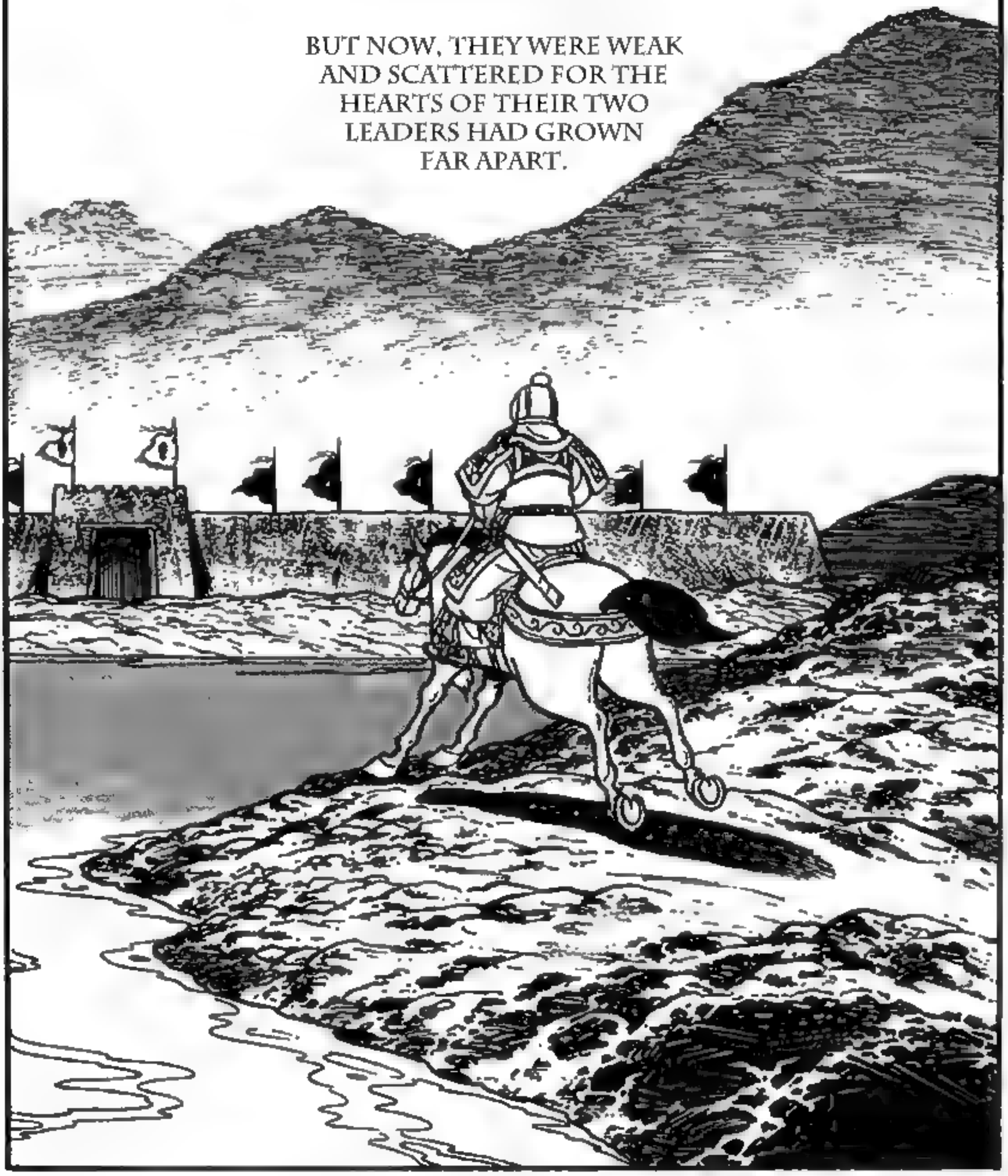
WITH HIS SHORT TEMPER, HE MAY VERY WELL KILL ME SOON...

ALLOW ME, MY LORD.

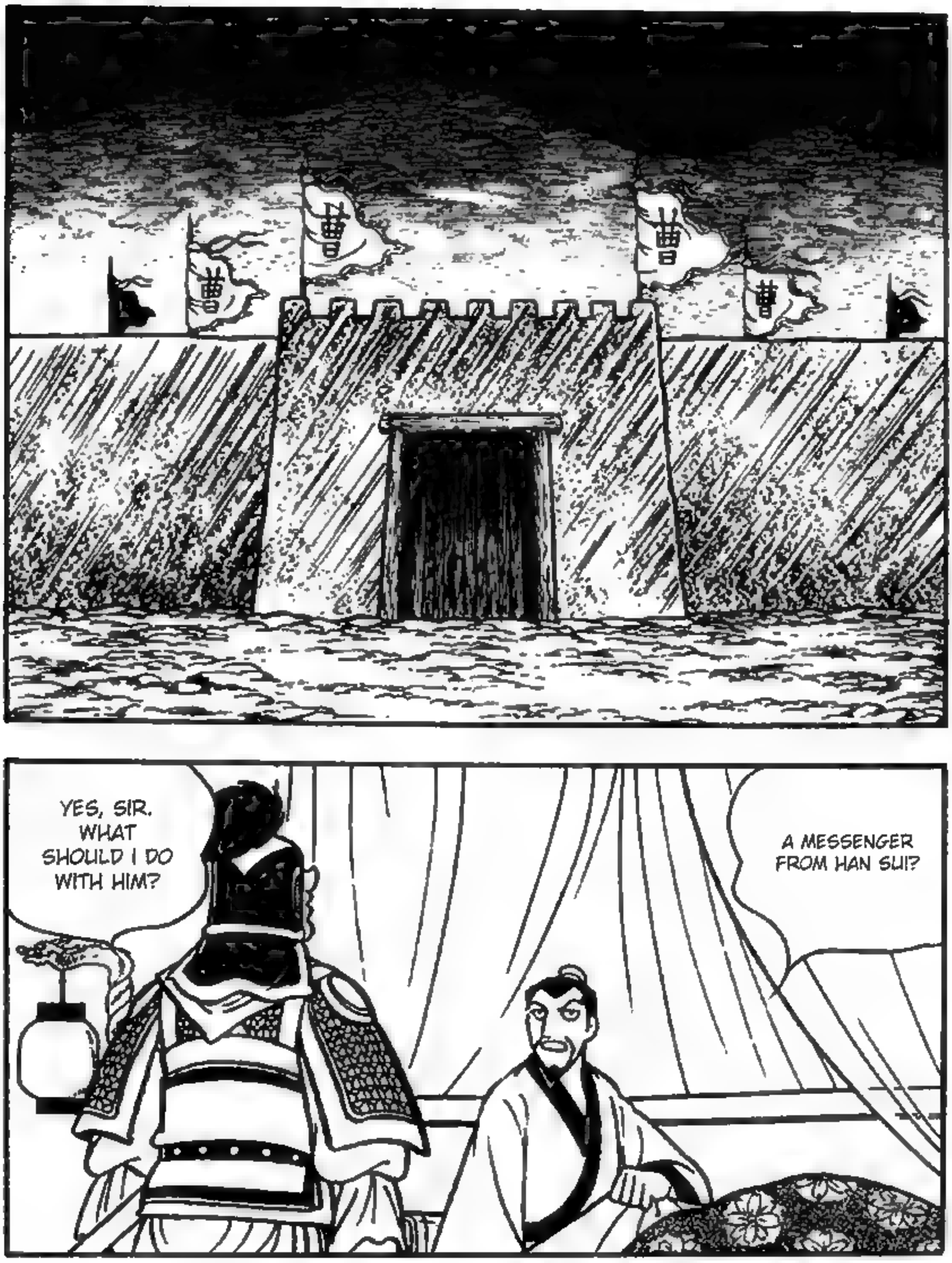
WHO HERE WILL GO TO CAO CAO FOR ME?

AND THUS, CAO CAO'S ESTRANGEMENT STRATEGY BORE FRUIT. THE XILIANG FORCES HAD SO FAR BEEN TRIUMPHANT FOR MA CHAO'S STRENGTH WAS SUPPORTED BY HAN SUI'S WIT AND VICE-VERSA.

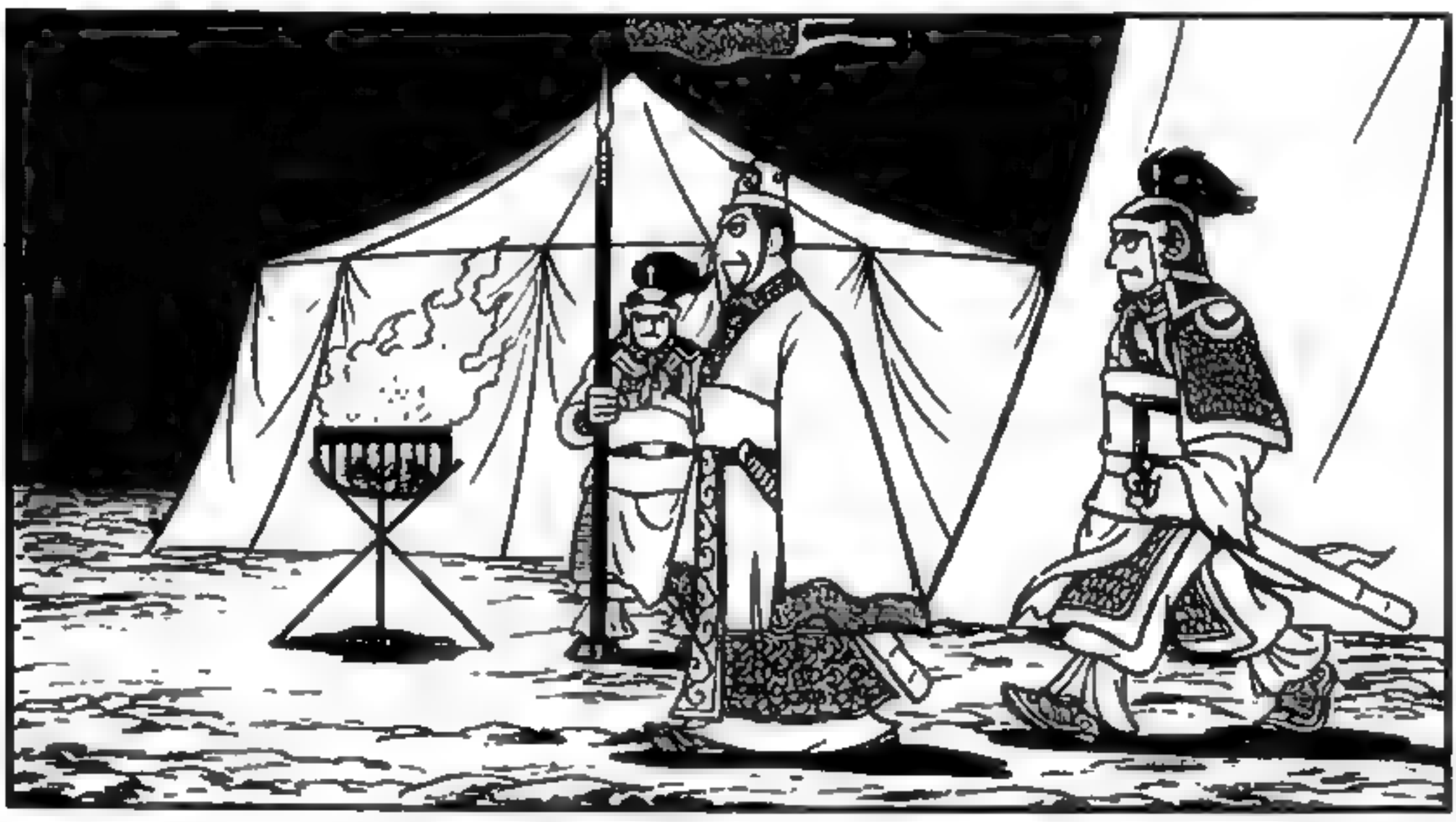
BUT NOW, THEY WERE WEAK AND SCATTERED FOR THE HEARTS OF THEIR TWO LEADERS HAD GROWN FAR APART.



MA CHAO FLEES



TELL HIM I'LL MEET WITH HIM SHORTLY.



YES, SIR.
SO YOU MUST BE HAN SUI'S MESSENGER.

MY LORD HAN SUI HAS DECIDED TO SURRENDER AND SERVE THE CHANCELLOR.

SO WHAT SORT OF MESSAGE IS THIS THAT IT NEEDS TO BE DELIVERED SO LATE AT NIGHT?

YES, SIR.

TELL HAN SUI THAT HE WILL BE APPOINTED AS THE IMPERIAL PROTECTOR OF XILIANG AND ALL HIS OFFICERS MAY KEEP THEIR RANK AND STATUS.

WHY THAT'S EXCELLENT NEWS! HIS FATHER WAS A GOOD ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE AND I NEVER WISHED TO FIGHT HIS SON IF POSSIBLE.

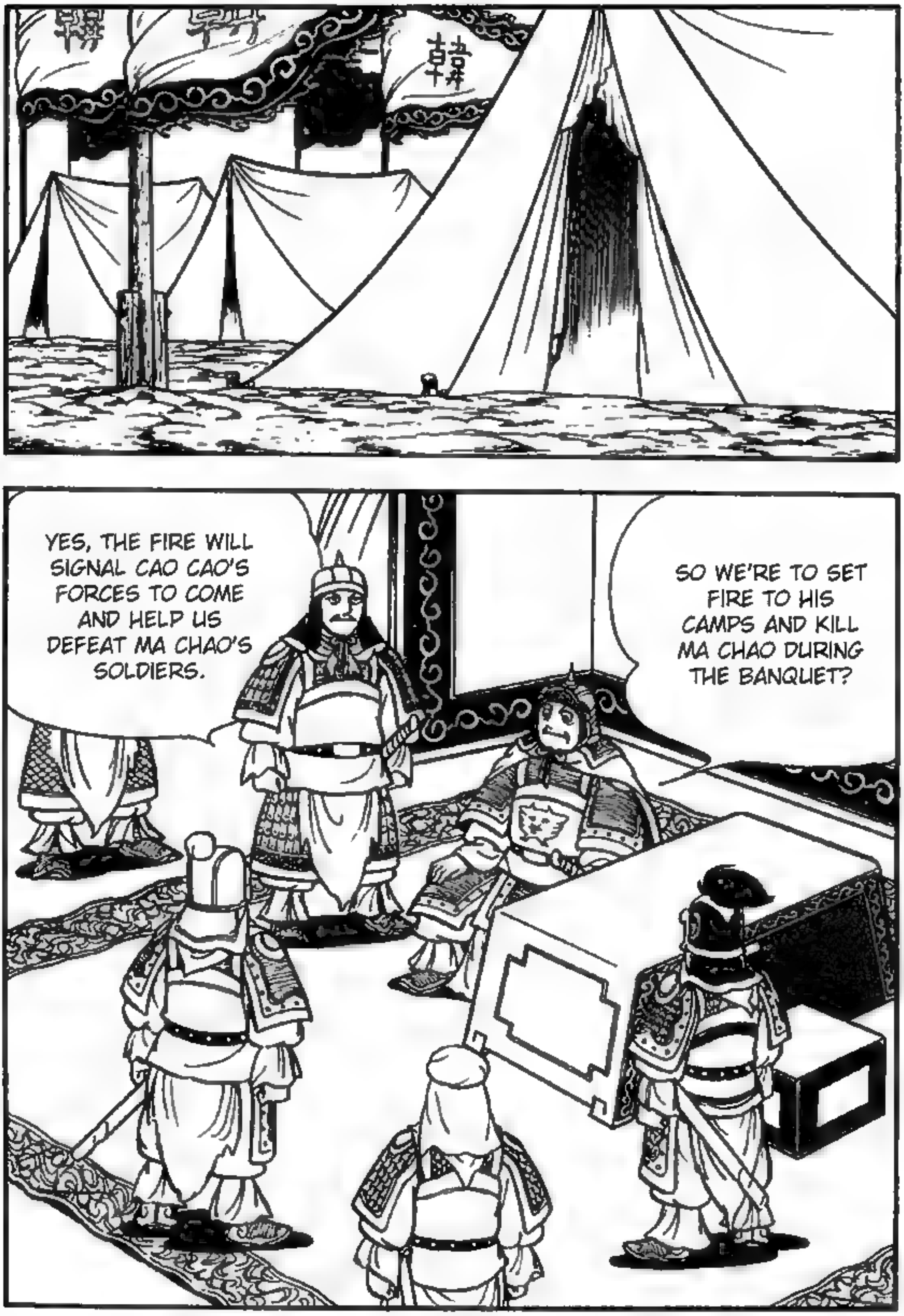
NOW THEN, THE ONLY PROBLEM IS HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MA CHAO...

TELL HAN SUI TO INVITE MA CHAO TO A BANQUET AND SET FIRE TO HIS CAMPS WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT.

MA CHAO CONSIDERS ME A MORTAL ENEMY FOR WHAT I DID TO HIS FATHER. IF I JUST LET HIM GO, HE WILL SURELY RISE UP AGAINST ME IN DUE TIME.

YES, SIR.

THE FIRE WILL BE THE SIGNAL FOR MY FORCES TO COME, AND TOGETHER WE CAN ELIMINATE MA CHAO AND HIS MEN FOR GOOD.


韓
YES, THE FIRE WILL SIGNAL CAO CAO'S FORCES TO COME AND HELP US DEFEAT MA CHAO'S SOLDIERS.
SO WE'RE TO SET FIRE TO HIS CAMPS AND KILL MA CHAO DURING THE BANQUET?

I BELIEVE HE WILL COME.

BUT DO YOU REALLY THINK MA CHAO WILL COME? HE'S ALREADY HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF ME.

NEVERTHELESS, I WANT YOU TO GO AHEAD AND PREPARE TO SET HIS CAMPS ON FIRE. START BY COLLECTING DRY BRANCHES AND TAKING THE OIL JUGS OUT.

YES, BUT WE SHOULD ALSO THINK WHAT TO DO IN CASE HE REFUSES...

THAT IS, AS LONG AS MY LORD SPECIFIES THAT THE BANQUET IS TO EASE TENSIONS AND CLEAR UP ANY SUSPICIONS...

UNDERSTOOD.

WE MUST FINISH HIM OFF FOR GOOD WHEN THE FIRE IS LIT. GOT THAT, MEN?

YES, I SPOTTED HIS TROOPS GATHERING DRY WOOD AND TAKING OUT JUGS OF OIL.

WHAT? SOMETHING SEEMS STRANGE AMONG HAN SUI'S CAMPS?

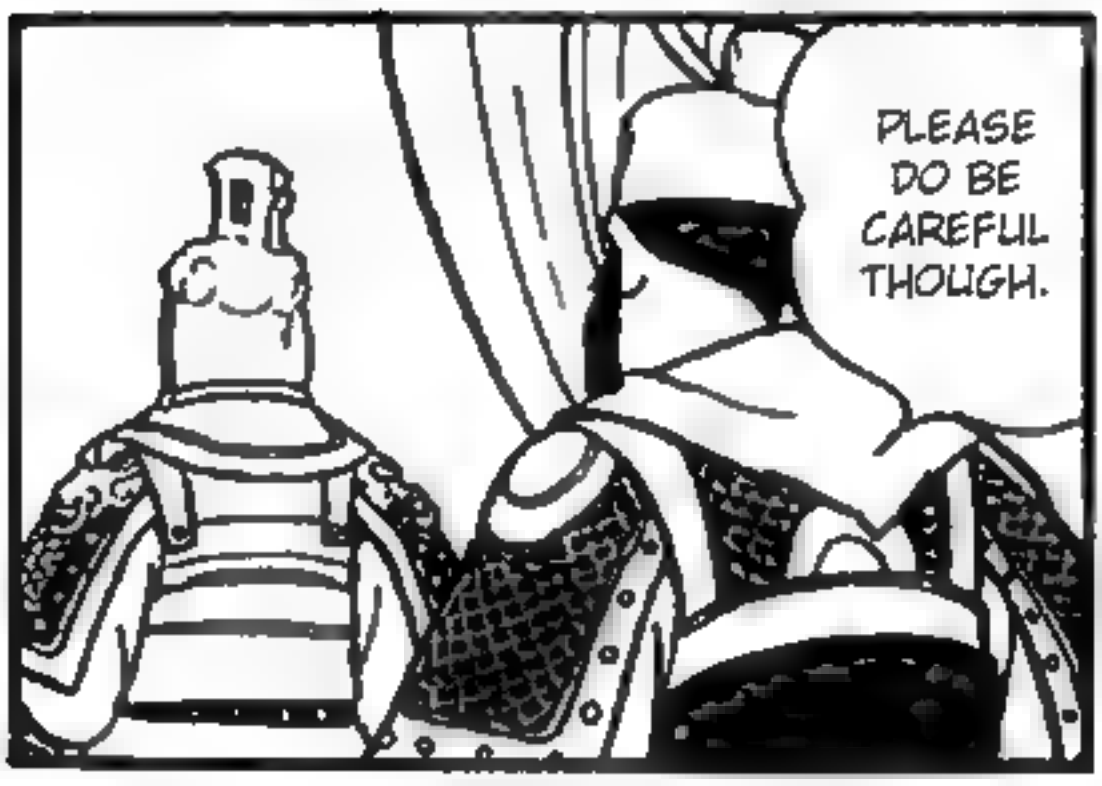
HM...

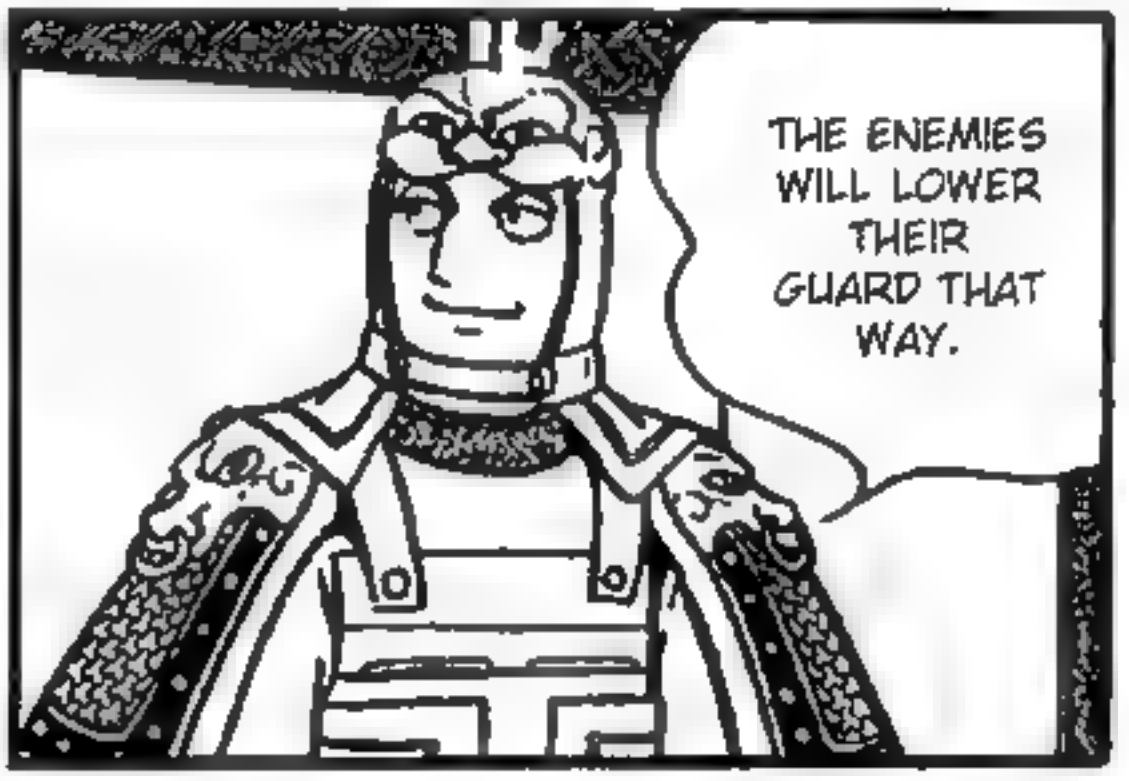
AS FOR THE OFFICERS, THEY WERE INSIDE HAN SUI'S TENT ALL AFTERNOON LONG, AS IF THEY WERE PLOTTING SOMETHING...

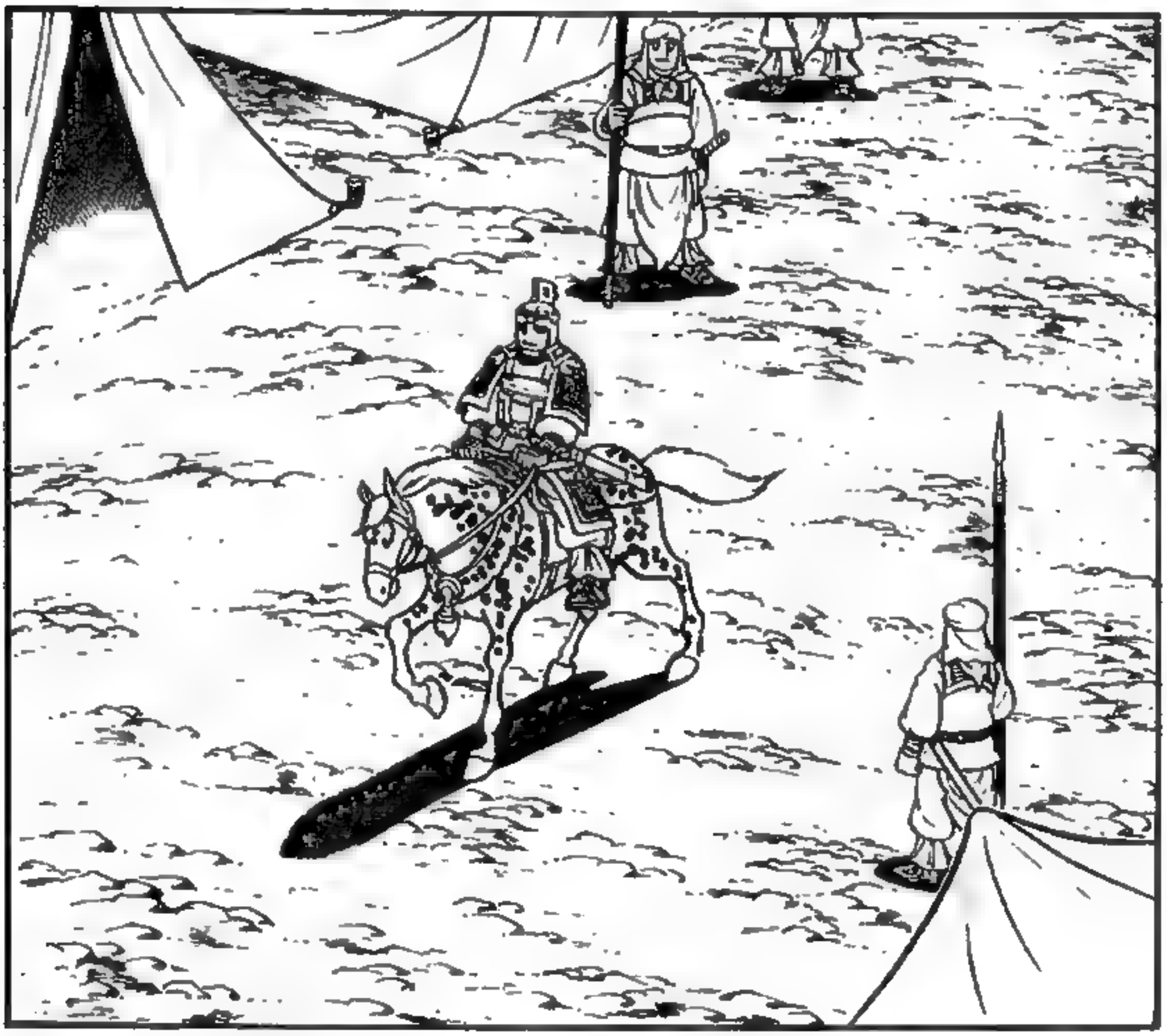
WE MUST NOT LET OUR GUARDS DOWN.

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS, PANG DE?

YOU'RE GOING ALONE?
I'LL GO ALONE TO FIRST OBSERVE. YOU AND MA DAI FOLLOW SHORTLY AFTER-WARDS WITH SOME OF YOUR TROOPS.


PLEASE DO BE CAREFUL THOUGH.


THE ENEMIES WILL LOWER THEIR GUARD THAT WAY.



THE CAMPS ARE SET TO BECOME A SEA OF FIRE AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

THE PREPARATIONS ARE COMPLETE, MY LORD.

I BELIEVE I CAN LURE HIM HERE.

GOOD. NOW WILL SOMEONE GO AND INVITE MA CHAO?

AH!

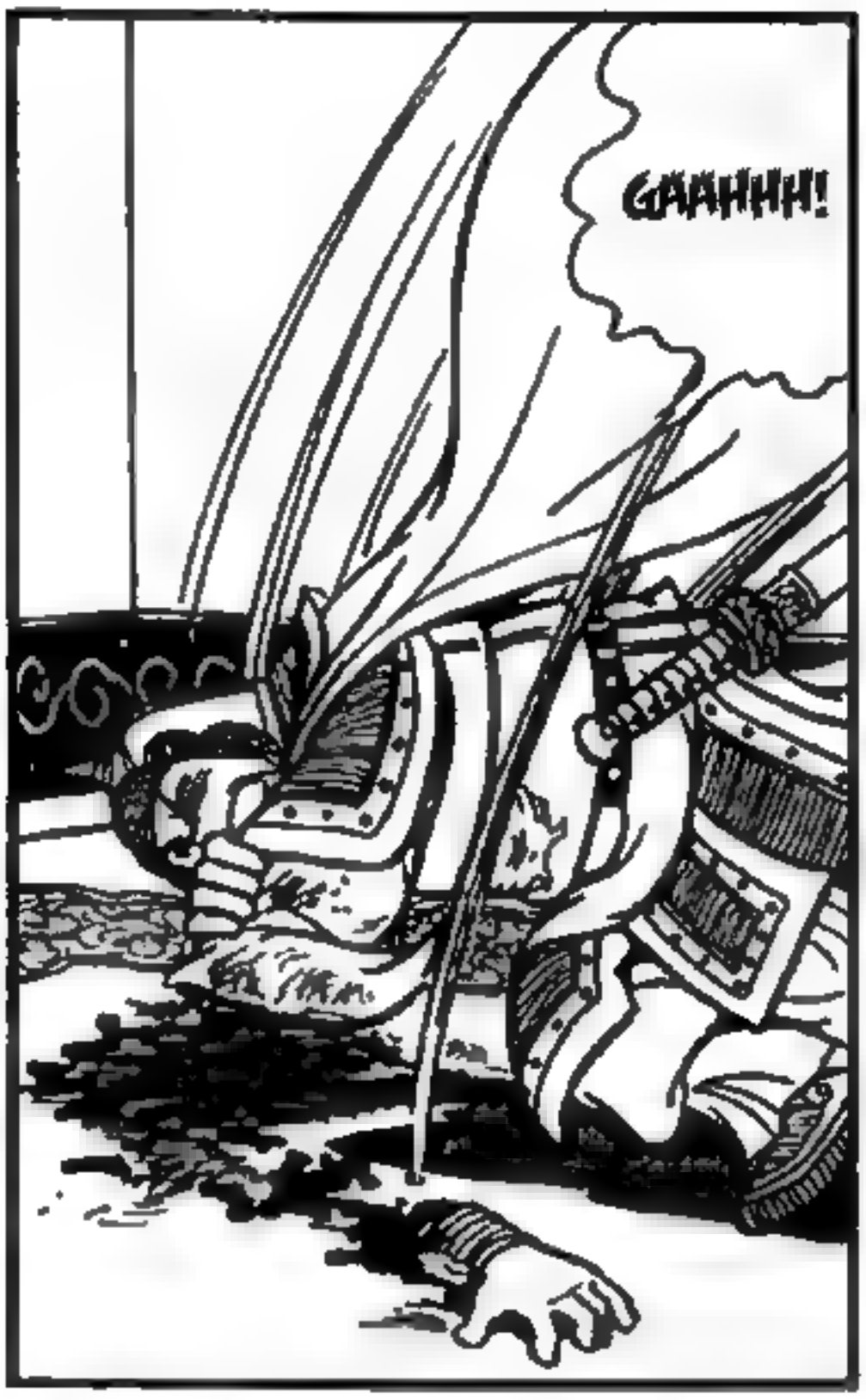
WHA?

NO NEED FOR THAT.

JUST AS I SWORE, I WILL KILL YOU HERE AND NOW!

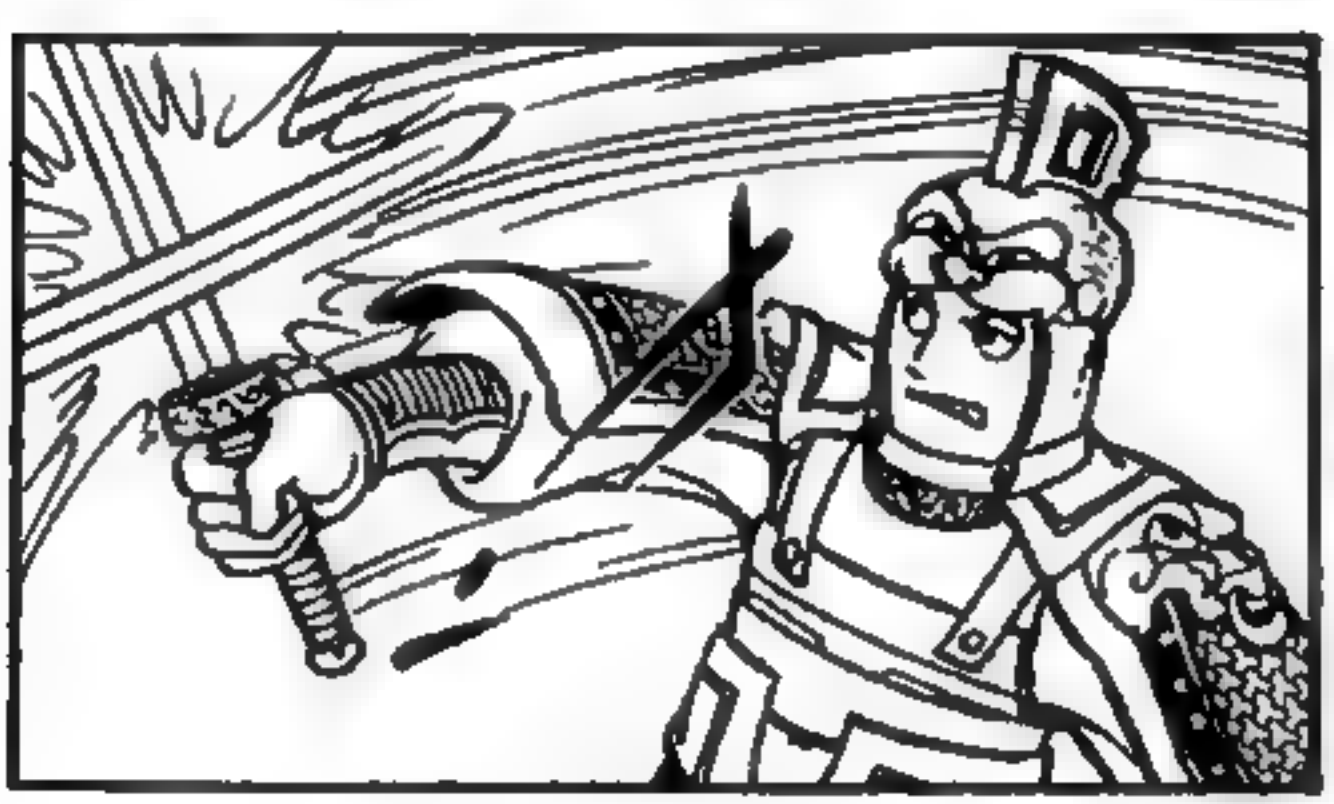
SO YOU *DID* BETRAY ME, JUST LIKE I SUSPECTED.

AGHHH!


GAAHHH!

NOT ON OUR WATCH!

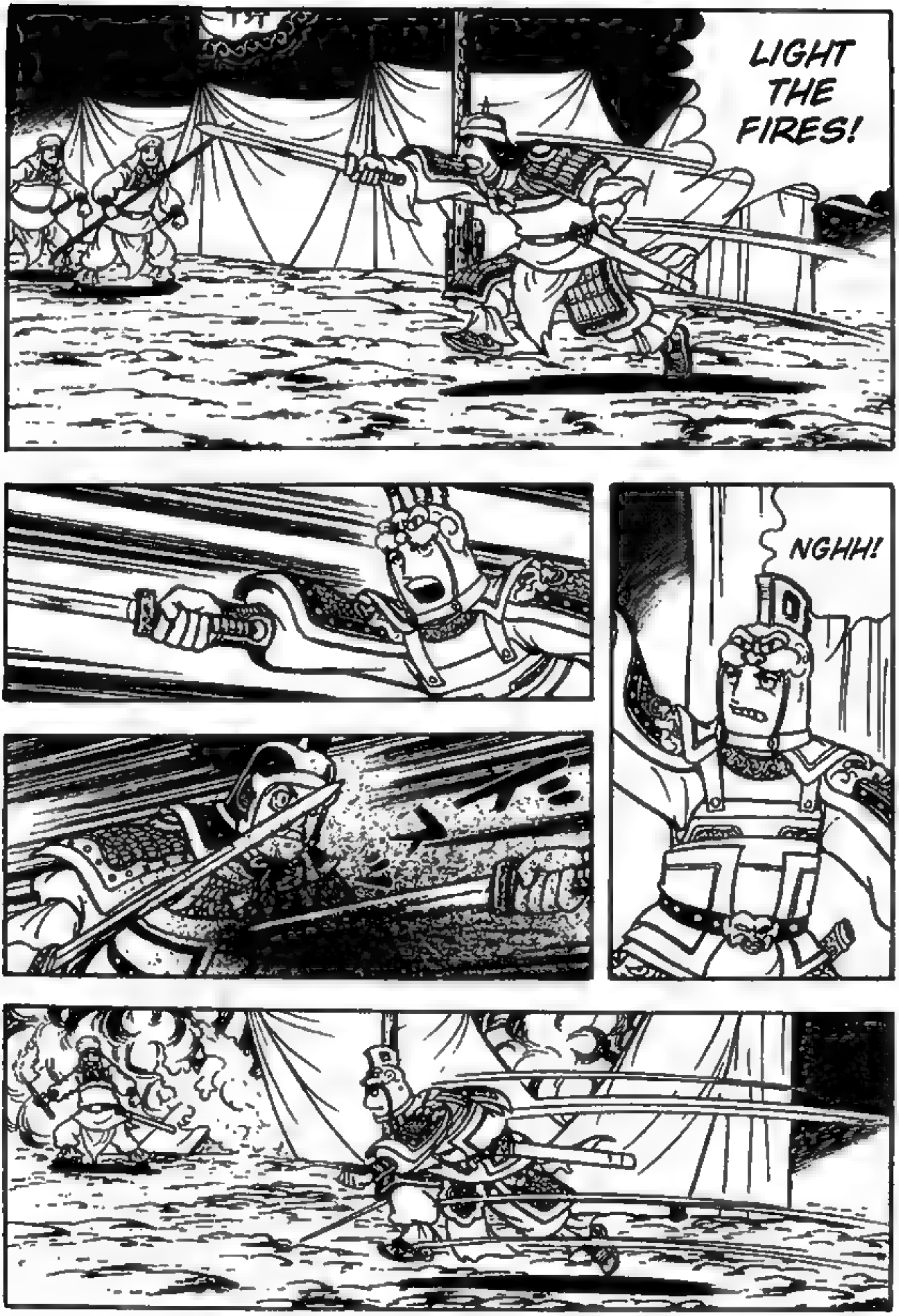
YOUR HEAD IS MINE!



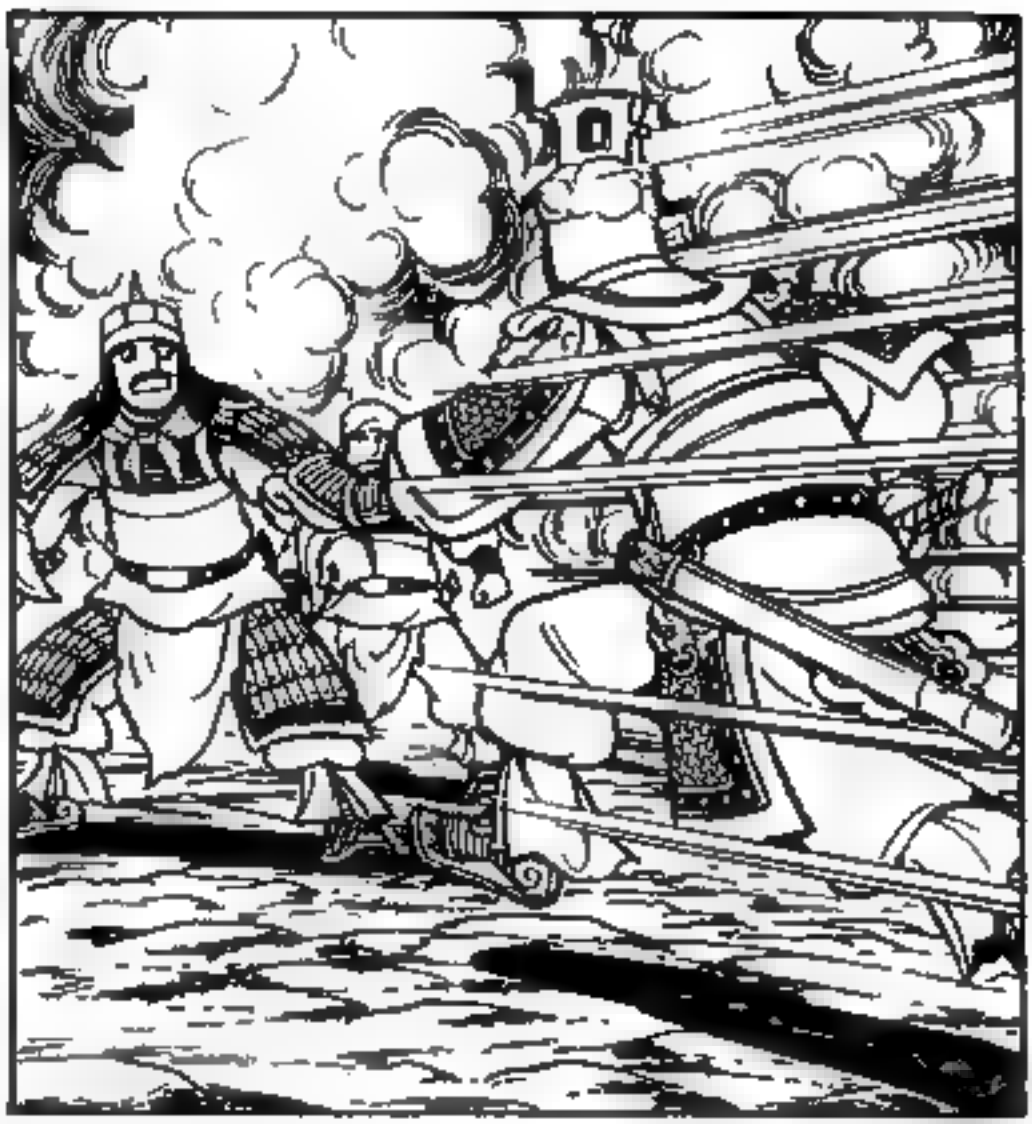
YOU DARE GET IN MY WAY!?

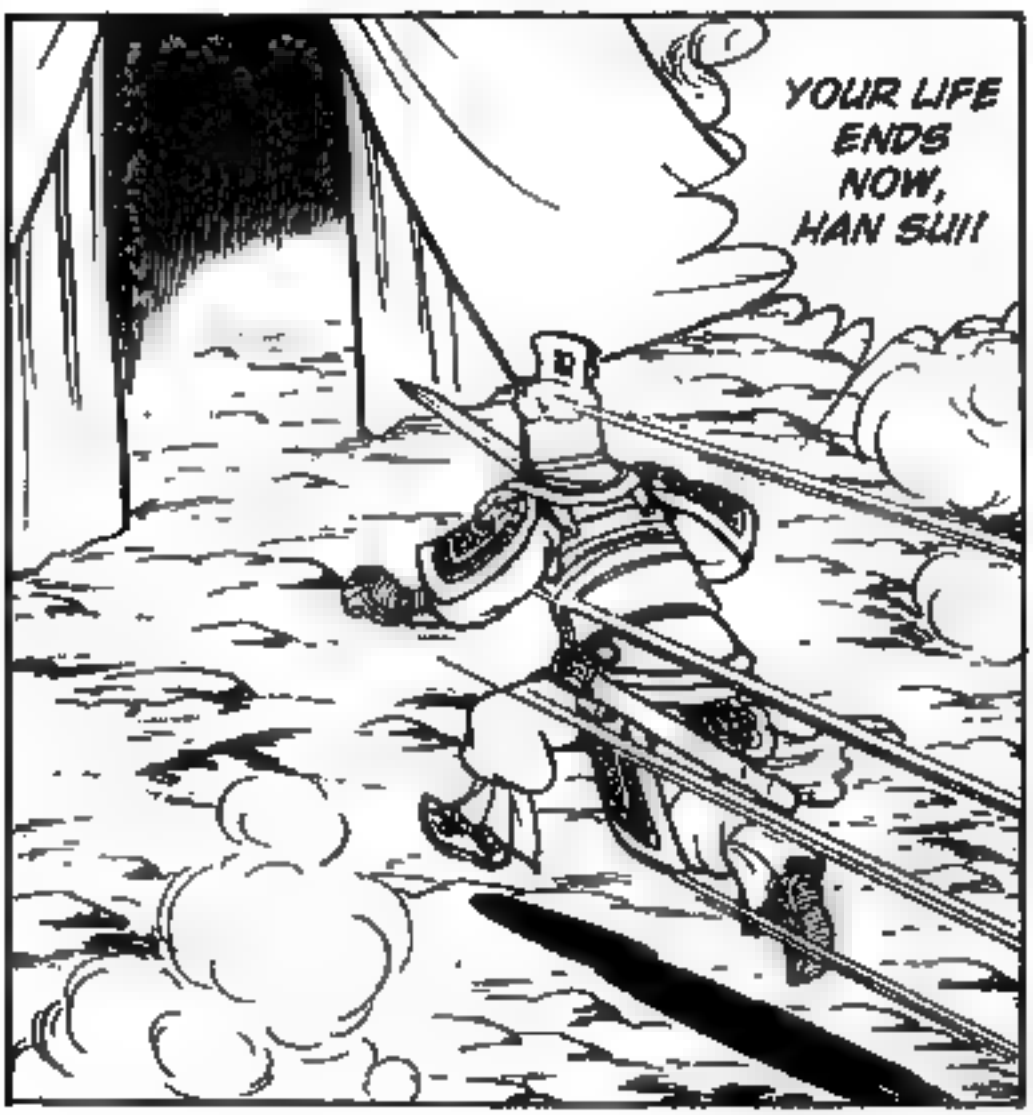
R-RIGHT!

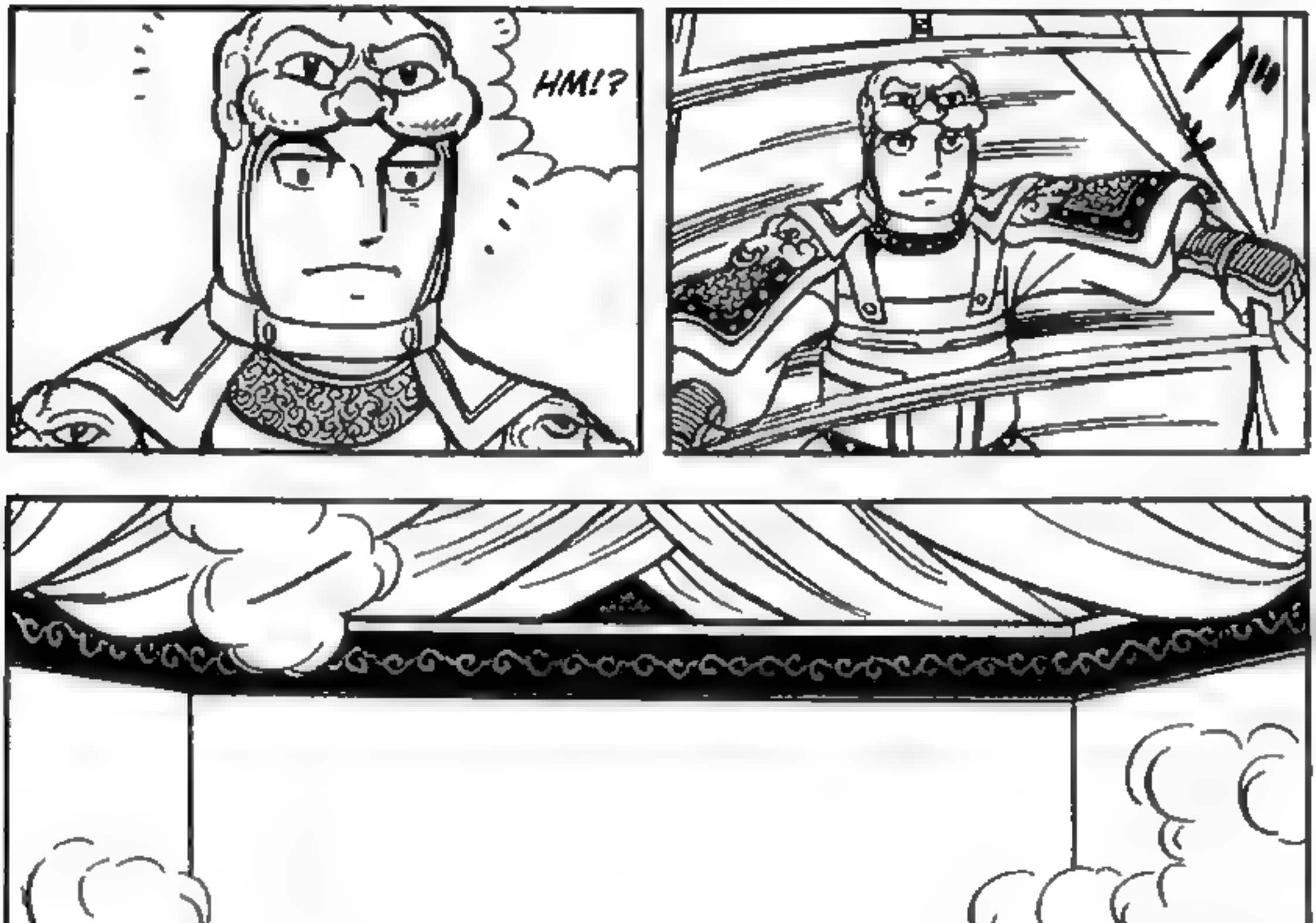
I'LL HANDLE HIM SO GIVE THE SIGNAL TO THE MEN!

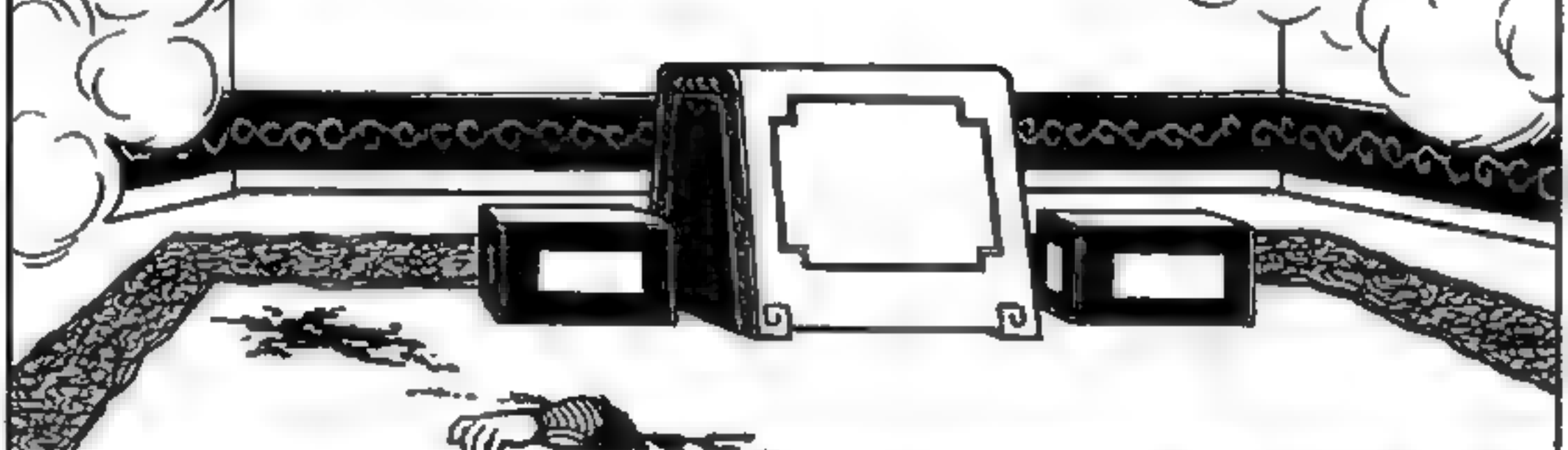

LIGHT THE FIRES!
NGHH!

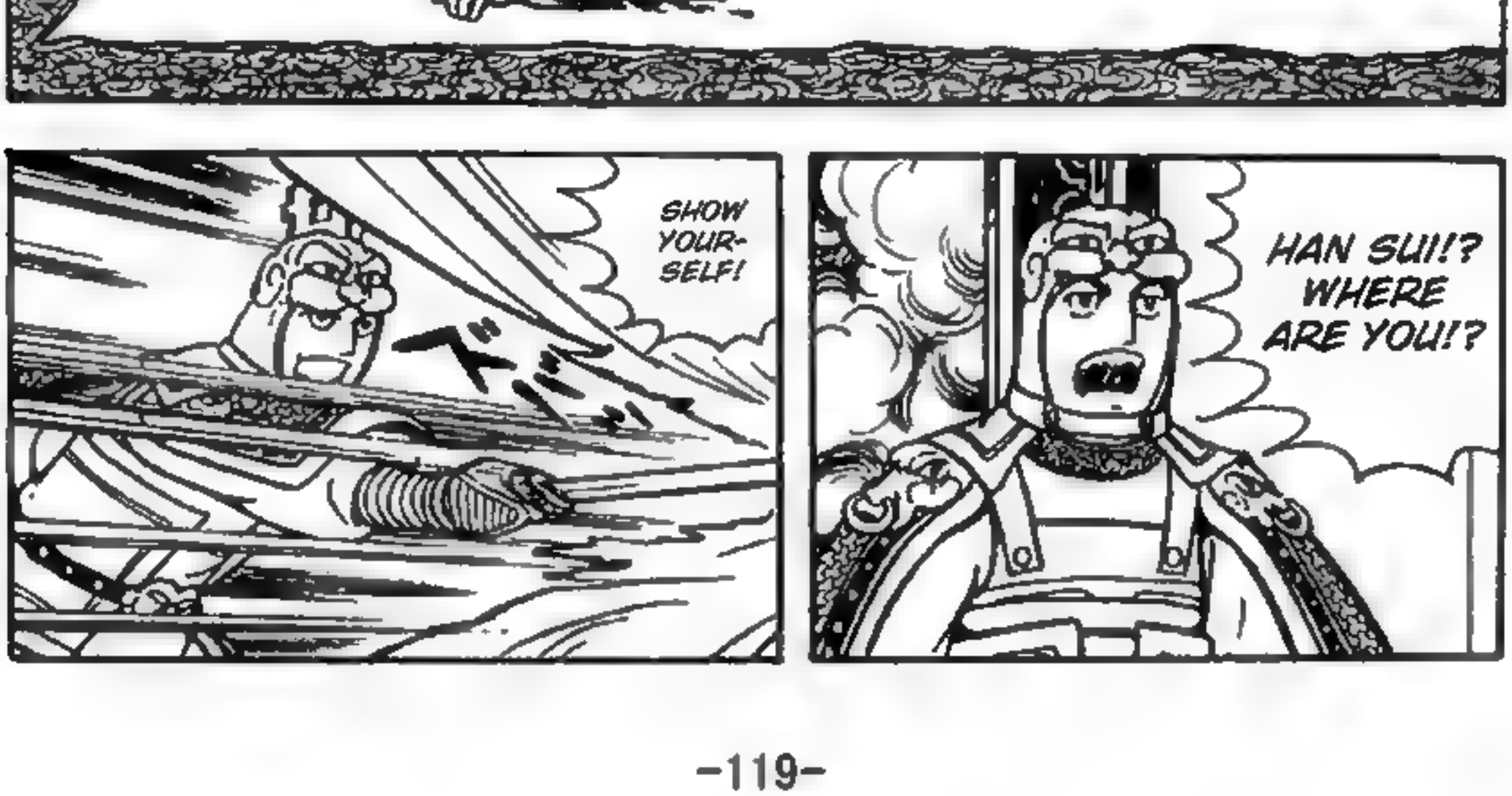
DIE!

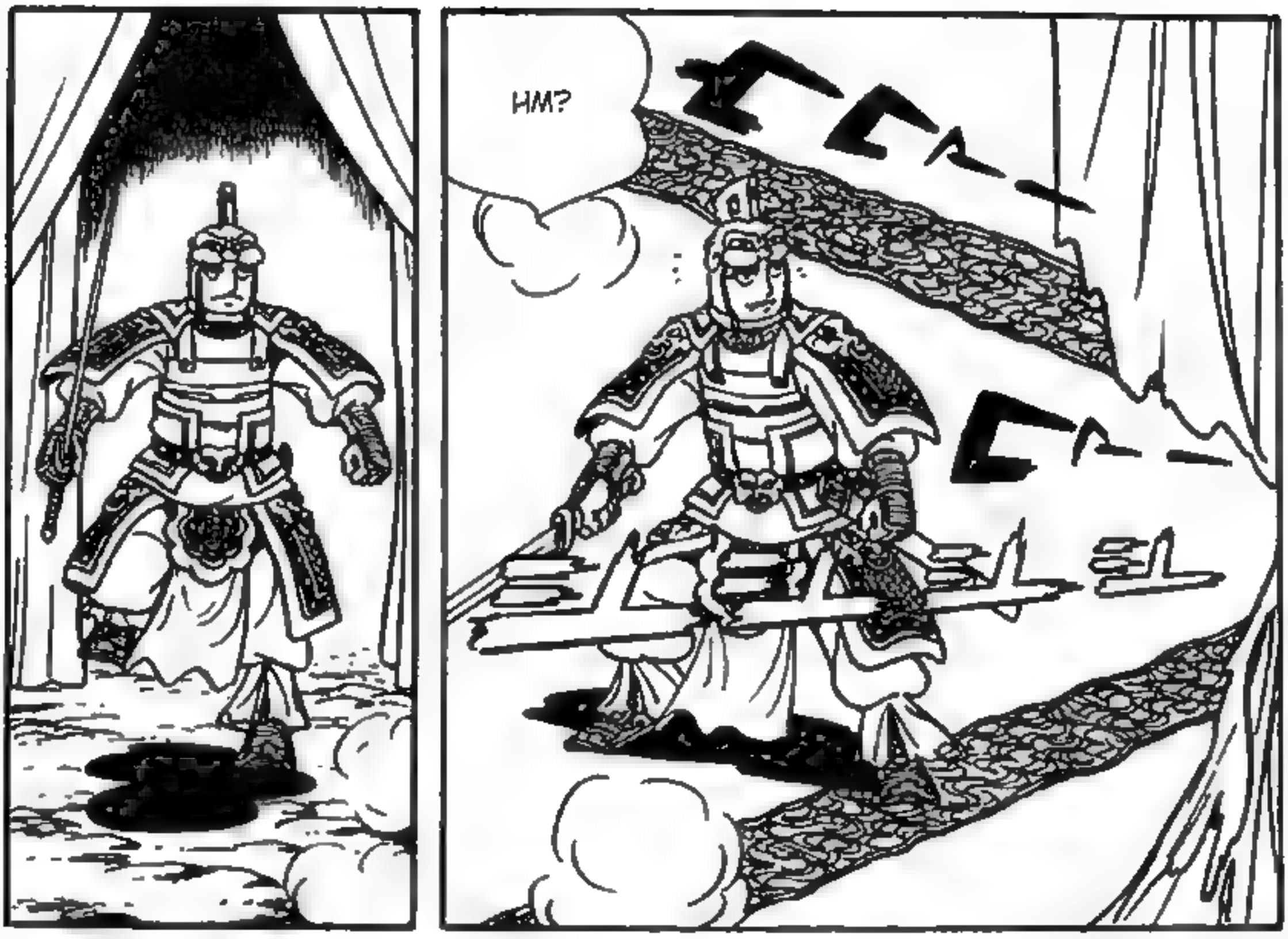



YOUR LIFE
ENDS
NOW,
HAN SUI!

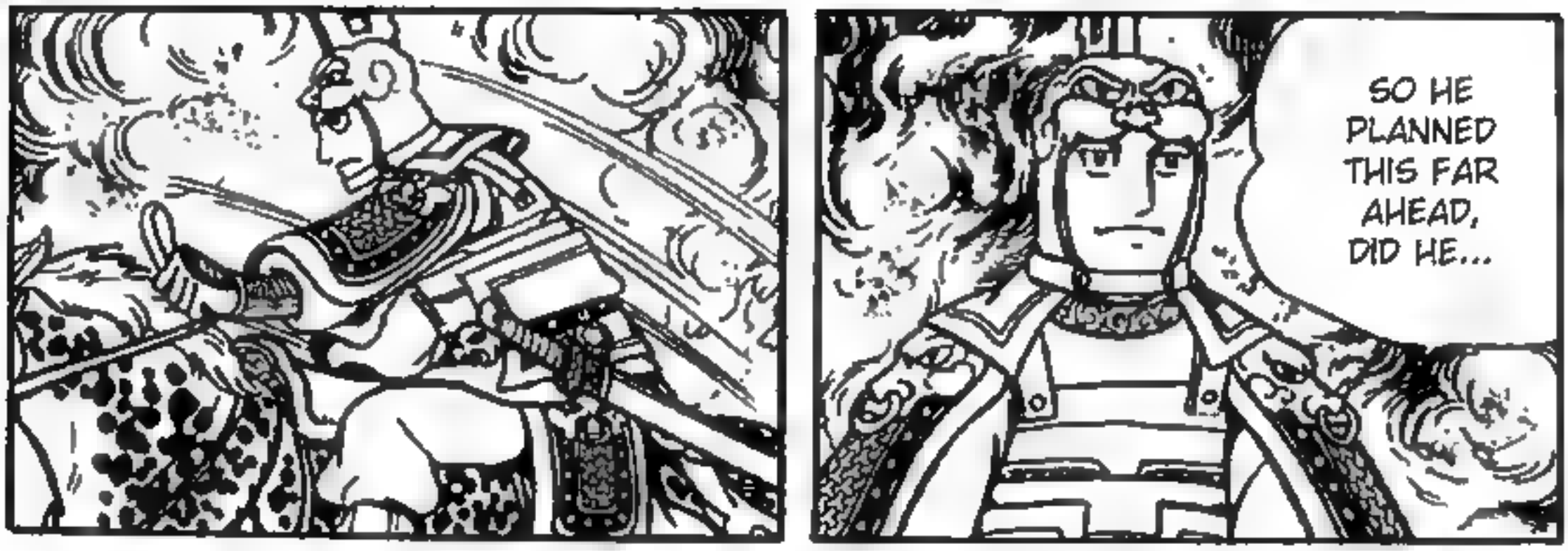

HM!?



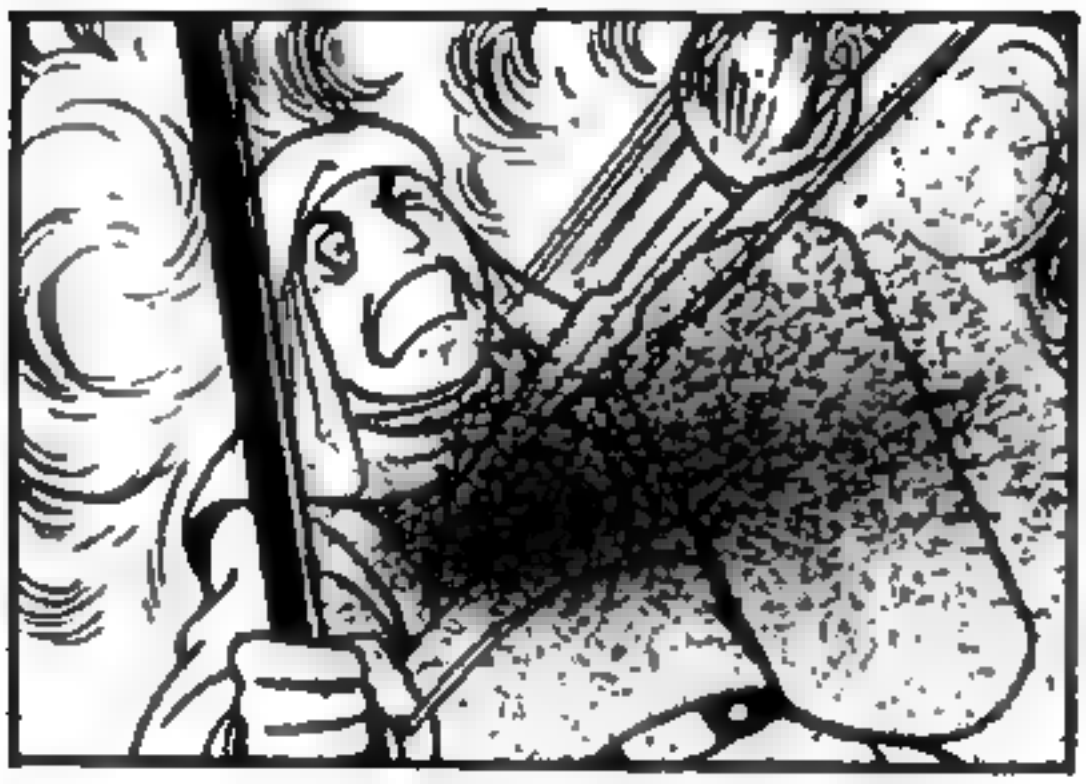

SHOW YOUR-SELF!
HAN SUI!? WHERE ARE YOU!?

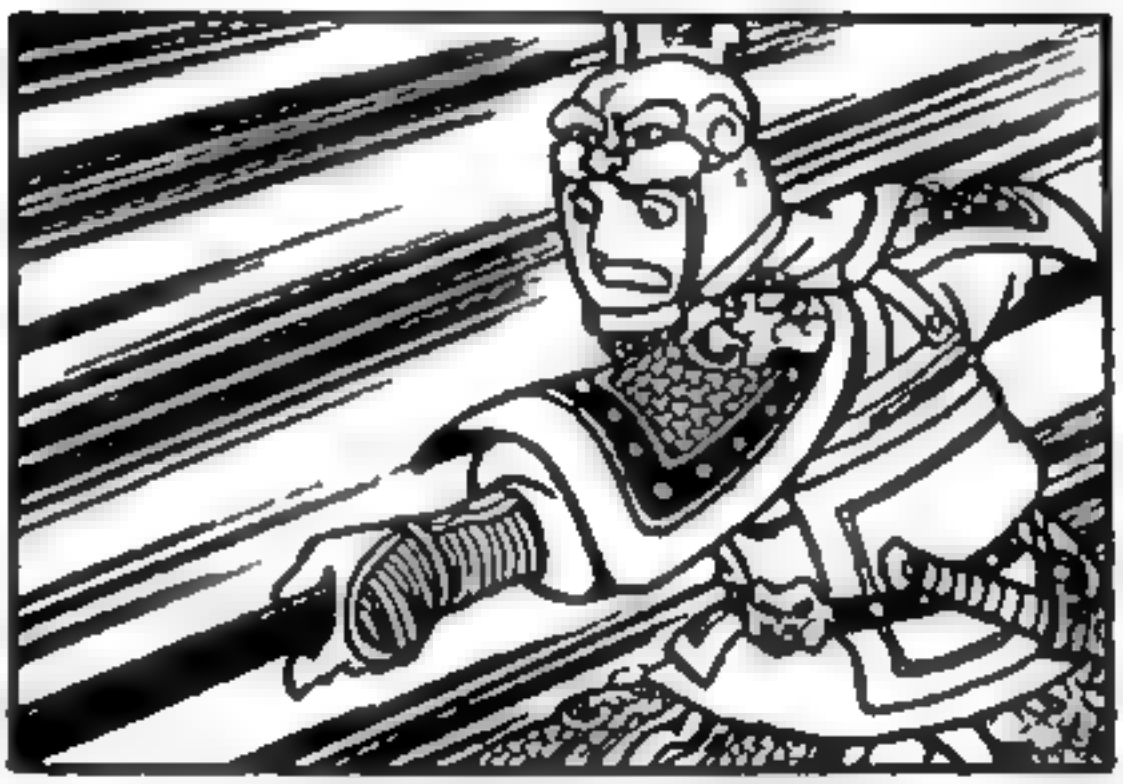

HM?

WHAT!?
SIR! CAO CAO'S SOLDIERS HAVE SURROUNDED US ON ALL SIDES!


SO HE PLANNED THIS FAR AHEAD, DID HE...

ATTACK!
SO BE IT! WE SHALL KILL BOTH HAN SUI'S AND CAO CAO'S MEN!





韓

FIND MA CHAO AT ALL COSTS!

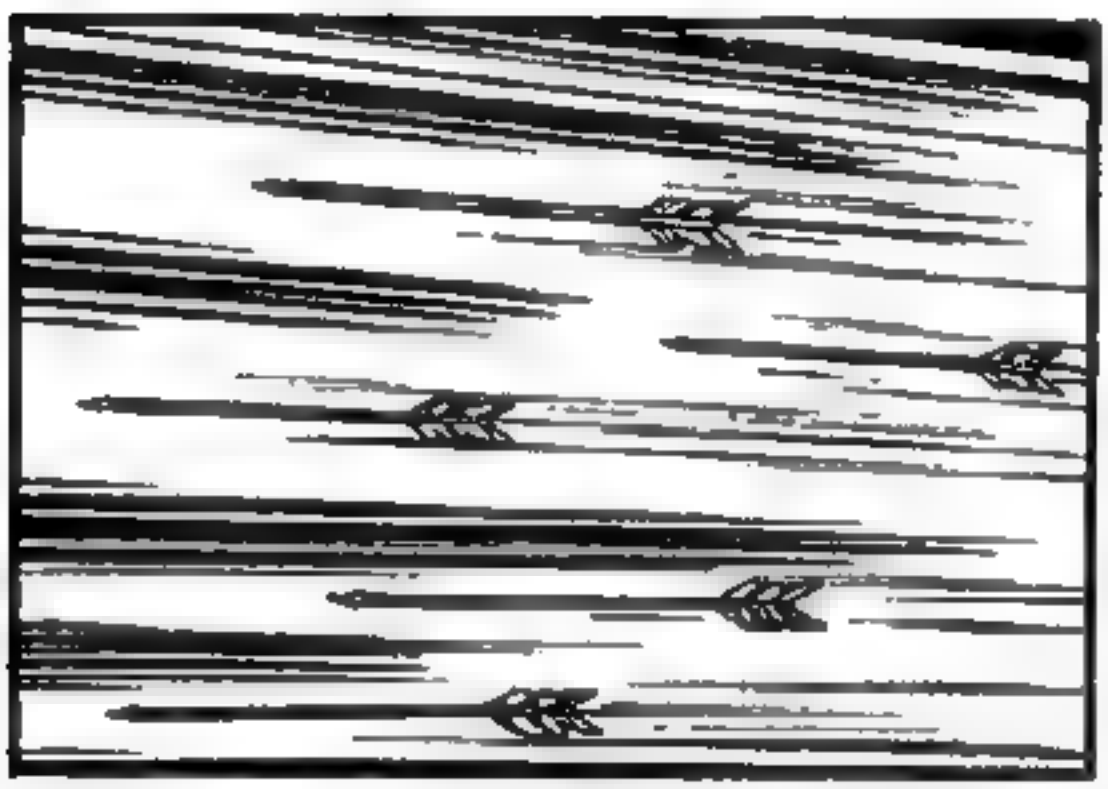
WHERE IS MA CHAO!?

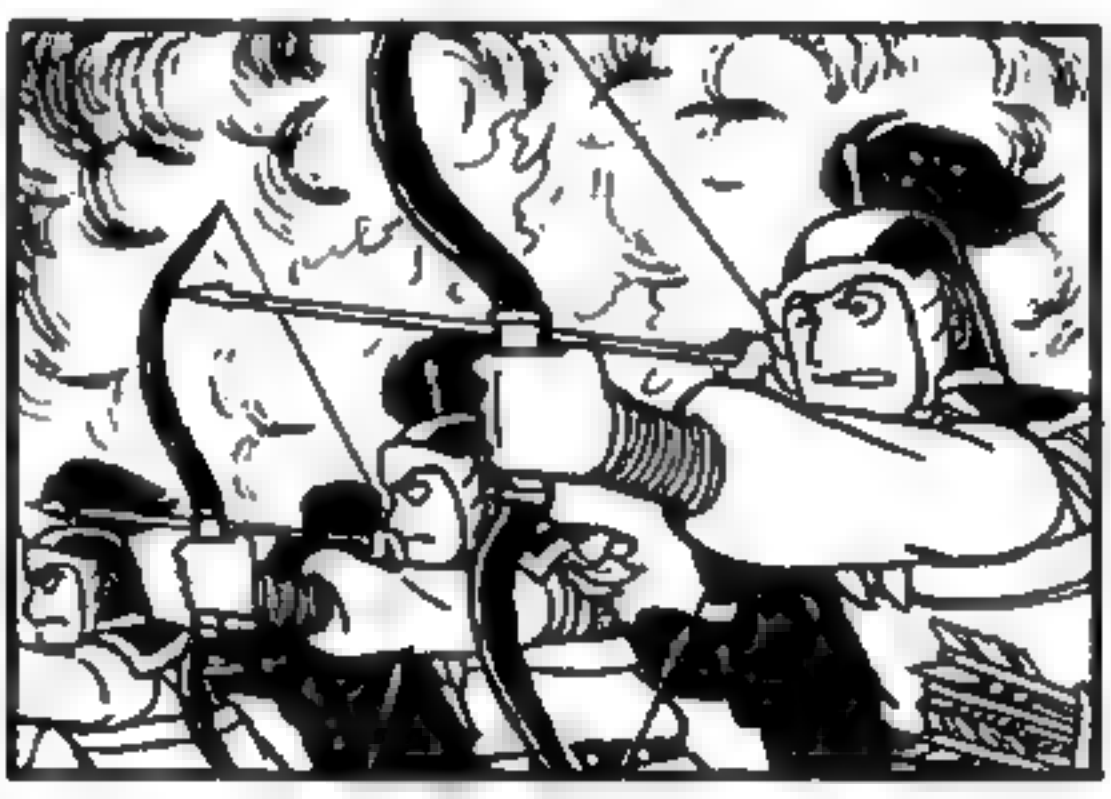
AHH!

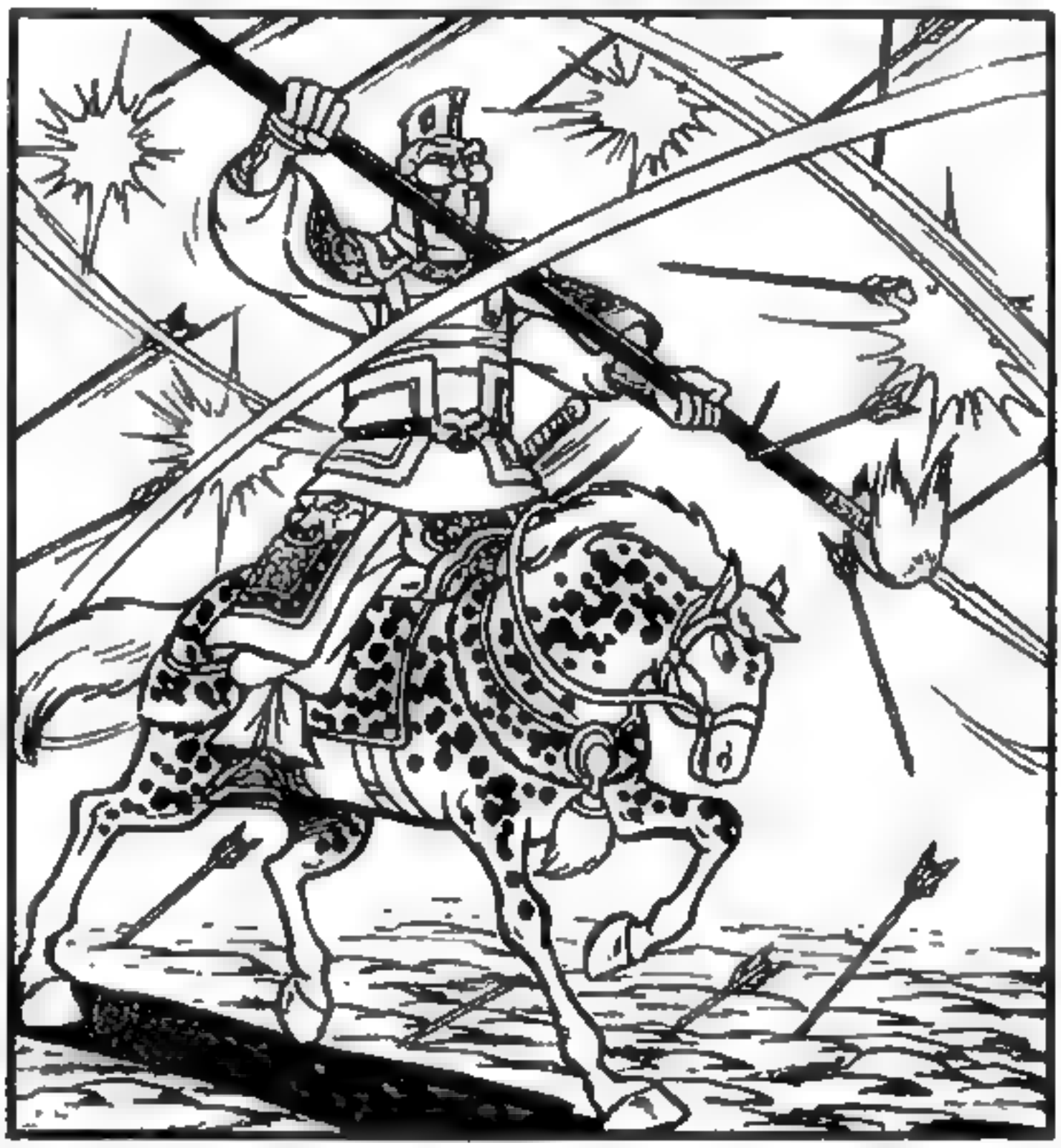
HE'S OVER THERE!

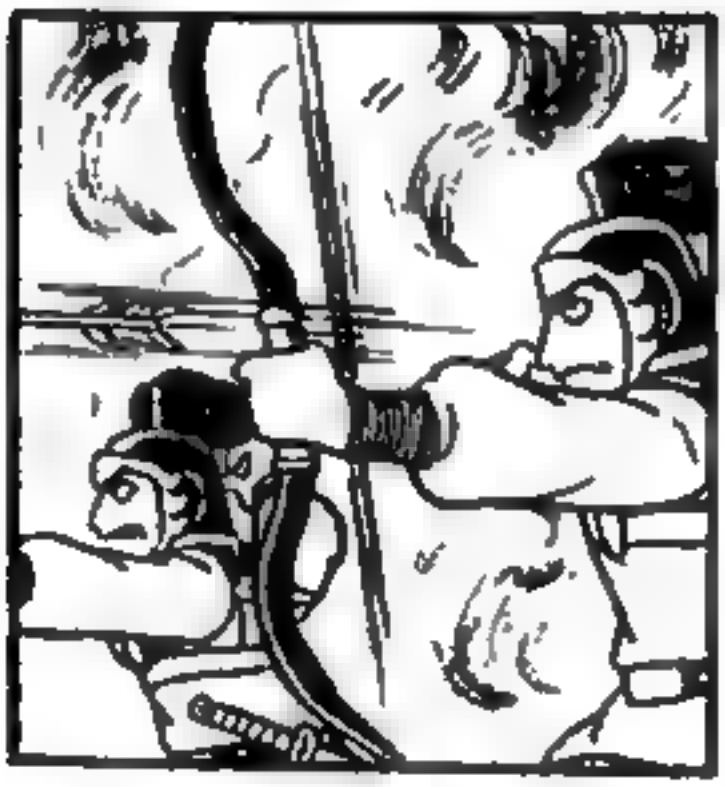
KILL HIM FROM AFAR! ARCHERS, SHOOT!

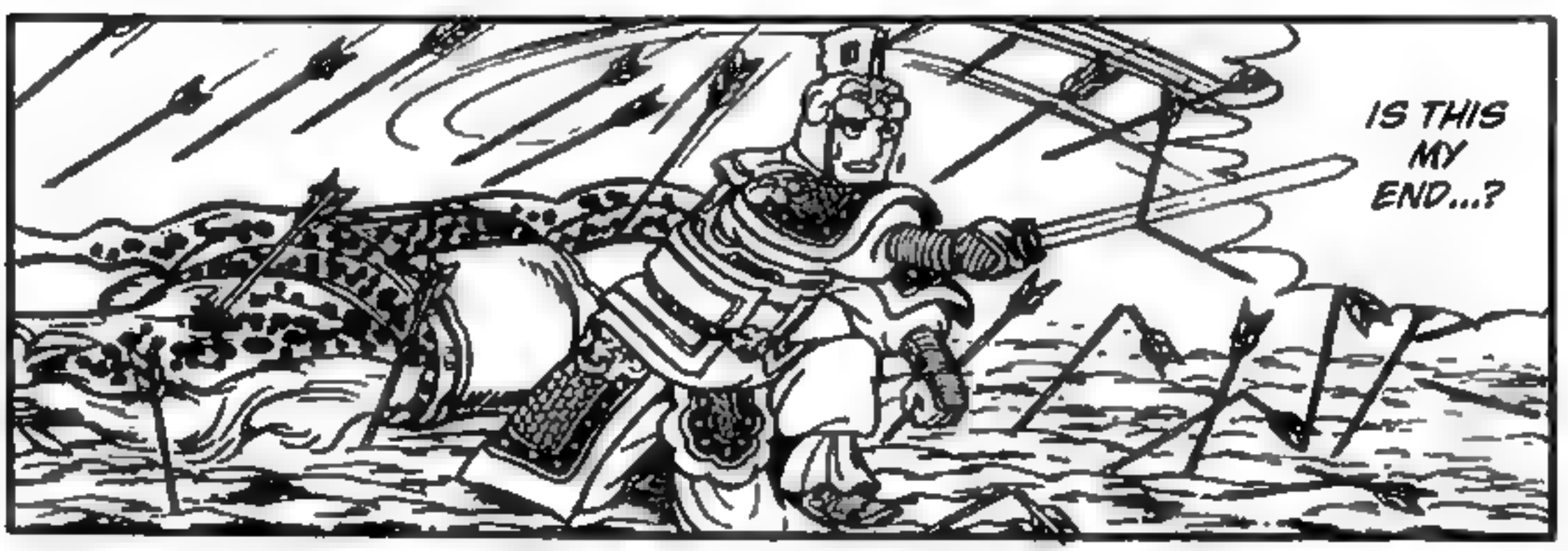
TRULY, A WILD BEAST OF A MAN HE IS.





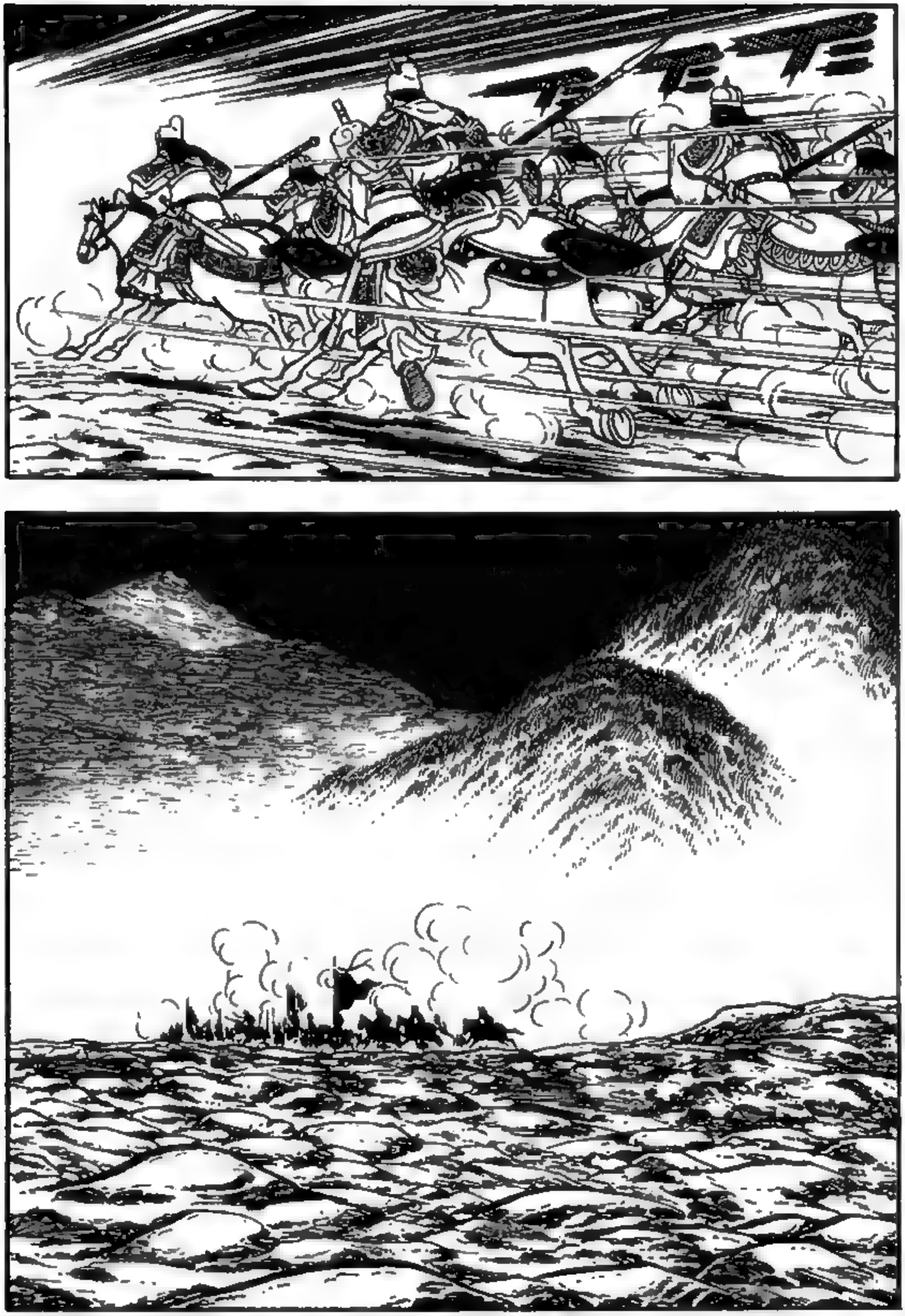





IS THIS
MY
END...?

PANG DE!
MA DAI!

GRAB ON,
SIR!



YES, SIR.

WHAT? MA CHAO ESCAPED!?

I SAW HIM FLEE WITH ABOUT 1000 CAVALRY-MEN. THE REST OF HIS FORCES HAVE SURREN-DERED.

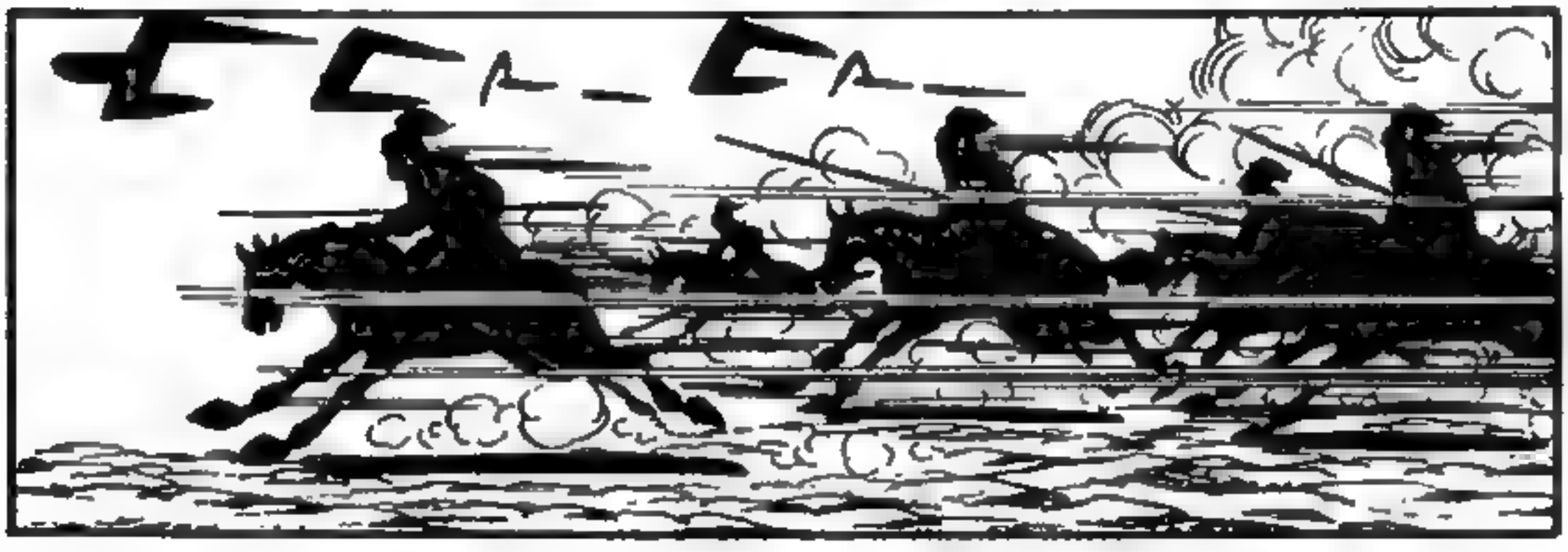
WITH AROUND HOW MANY SOLDIERS?

LISTEN UP, MEN! WHOEVER BRINGS ME MA CHAO'S HEAD, I SHALL BESTOW UPON THE RANK OF A LORD!

LETTING SUCH A DANGEROUS MAN CANNOT BE ALLOWED.

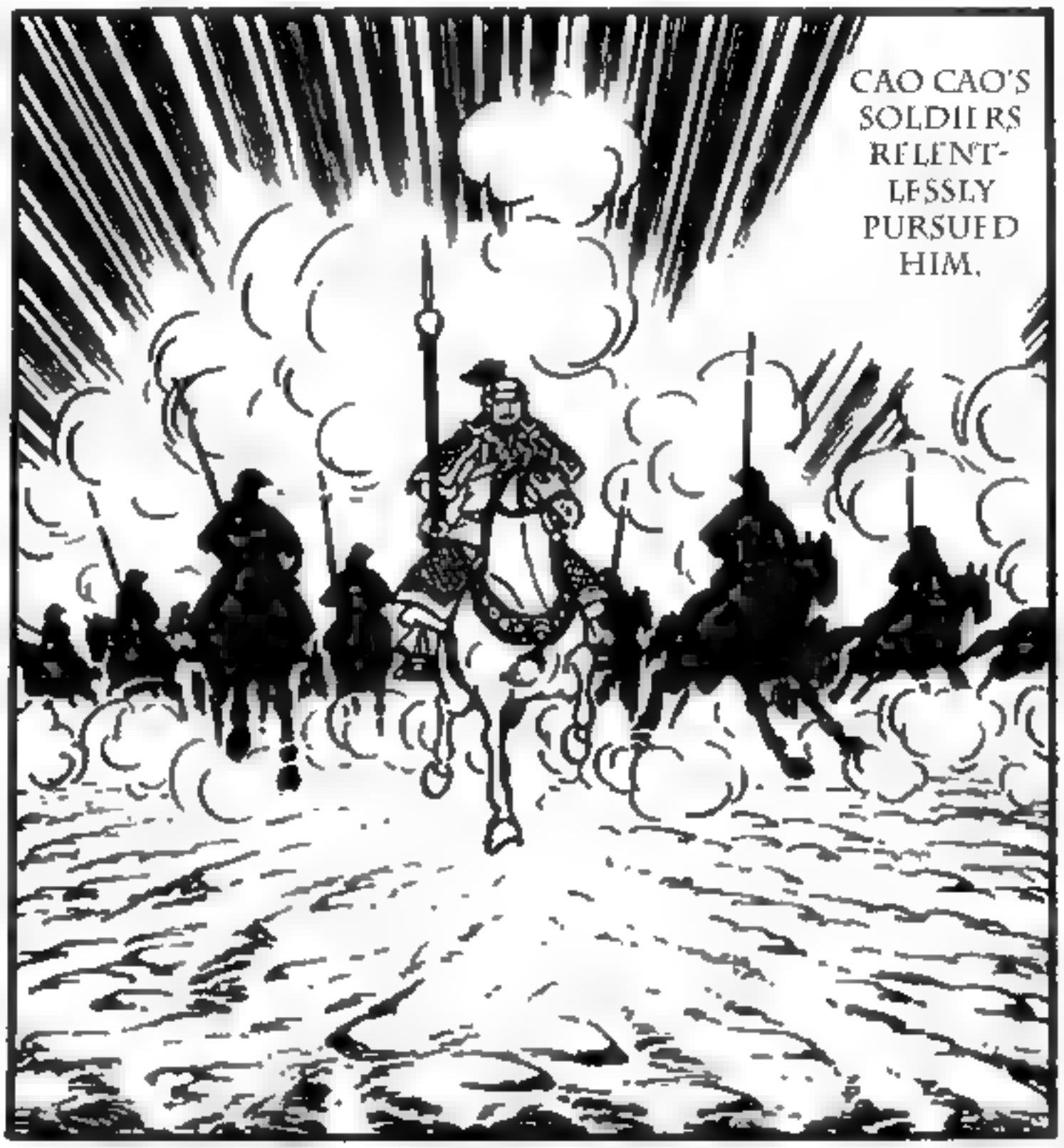
!
A LORD!?

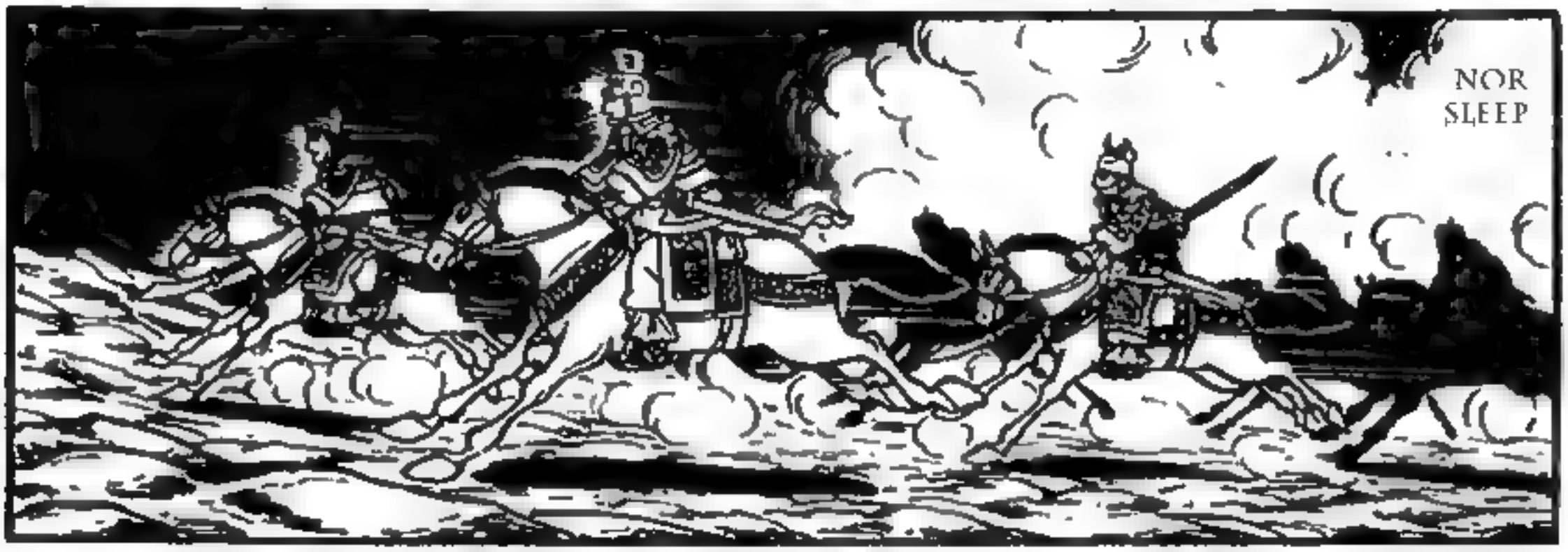
AFTER HIM!



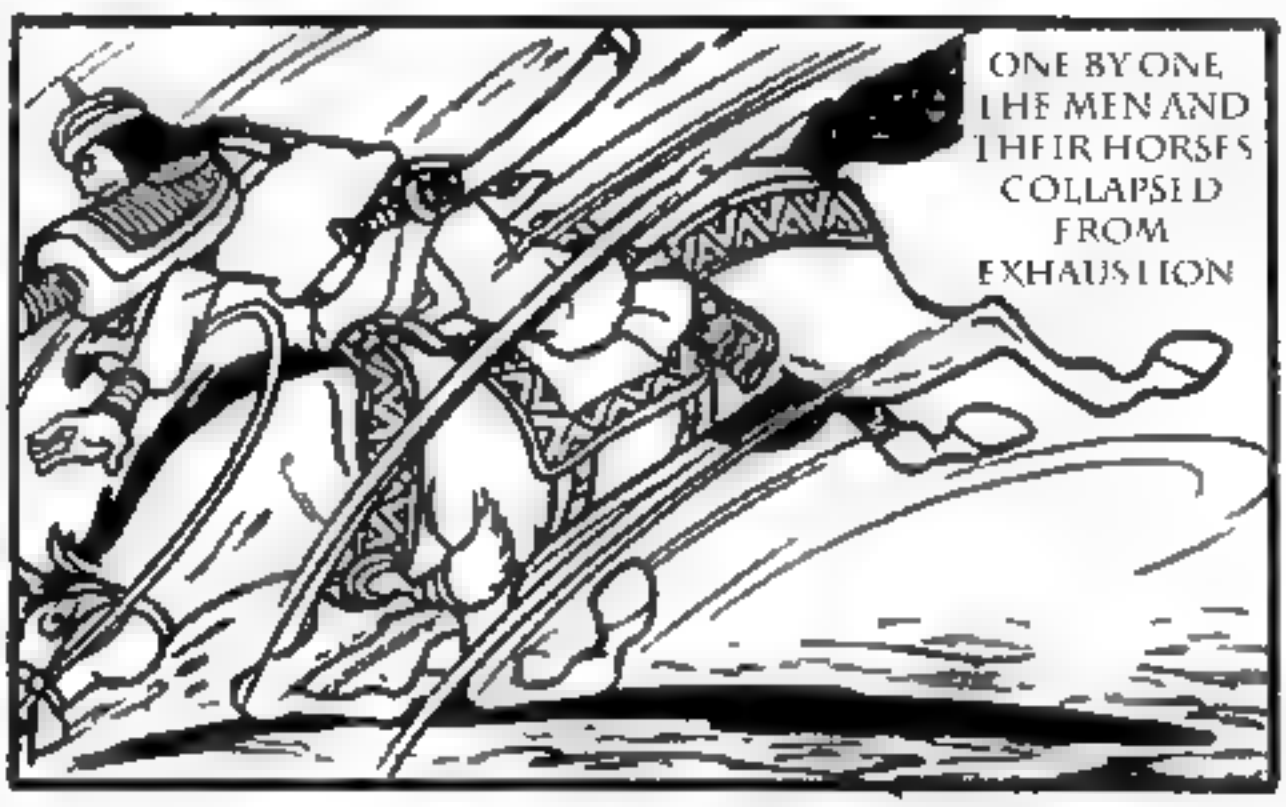
WITH SUCH A HIGH BOUNTY FOR HIS HEAD, EVEN THE MIGHTY MA CHAO COULD ONLY FLEE

AND SO HE HAD NEITHER A MOMENT TO REST HIS HORSE.


CAO CAO'S SOLDIERS RELENT-LESSLY PURSUED HIM.


NOR SLEEP

AND WITHOUT EVEN EATING, THEY CONTIN UED TO FLEE.


ONE BY ONE THE MEN AND THEIR HORSES COLLAPSED FROM EXHAUSTION

AND BY THE TIME HE HAD REACHED LINTAO, THERE WERE ONLY 30 MEN STILL ACCOMPANYING HIM.

YES, WE BELIEVE HE'S STILL SOME WAYS AHEAD OF US.

IS MA CHAO STILL NOWHERE TO BE SEEN?

CURSES! AT THIS RATE, HE'LL GROW AGAIN TO BE A PAINFUL THORN AT MY SIDE...

OH?

A MESSEN-GER HAS ARRIVED FROM THE CAPITAL.

SIR!

GO ON.

I HAVE COME TO DELIVER A LETTER FROM YOUR ADVISOR, XUN YU.

カッ

カッ

I SUGGEST FOR THEIR RETURN SO THAT XUCHANG WILL REMAIN SECURE...

THE NORTHERN CLOUDS' LONG WITHDRAWAL HAS CAUSED THE YANGTZE RIVER TO BECOME TURBULENT.

INDEED, I HAVE LEFT XUCHANG FOR FAR TOO LONG.

IT APPEARS THAT IN OUR LONG ABSENCE, THE SOUTHLANDS ARE BEGINNING TO SHOW SUSPICIOUS MOVEMENTS.

WE SHALL RETURN TO THE CAPITAL.

AS DO I, SIR. LEAVING NOW WILL BE AKIN TO A MAN EXTINGUISHING A FIRE BUT IGNORING THE EMBERS.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE THAT DECISION, CHANCELLOR.

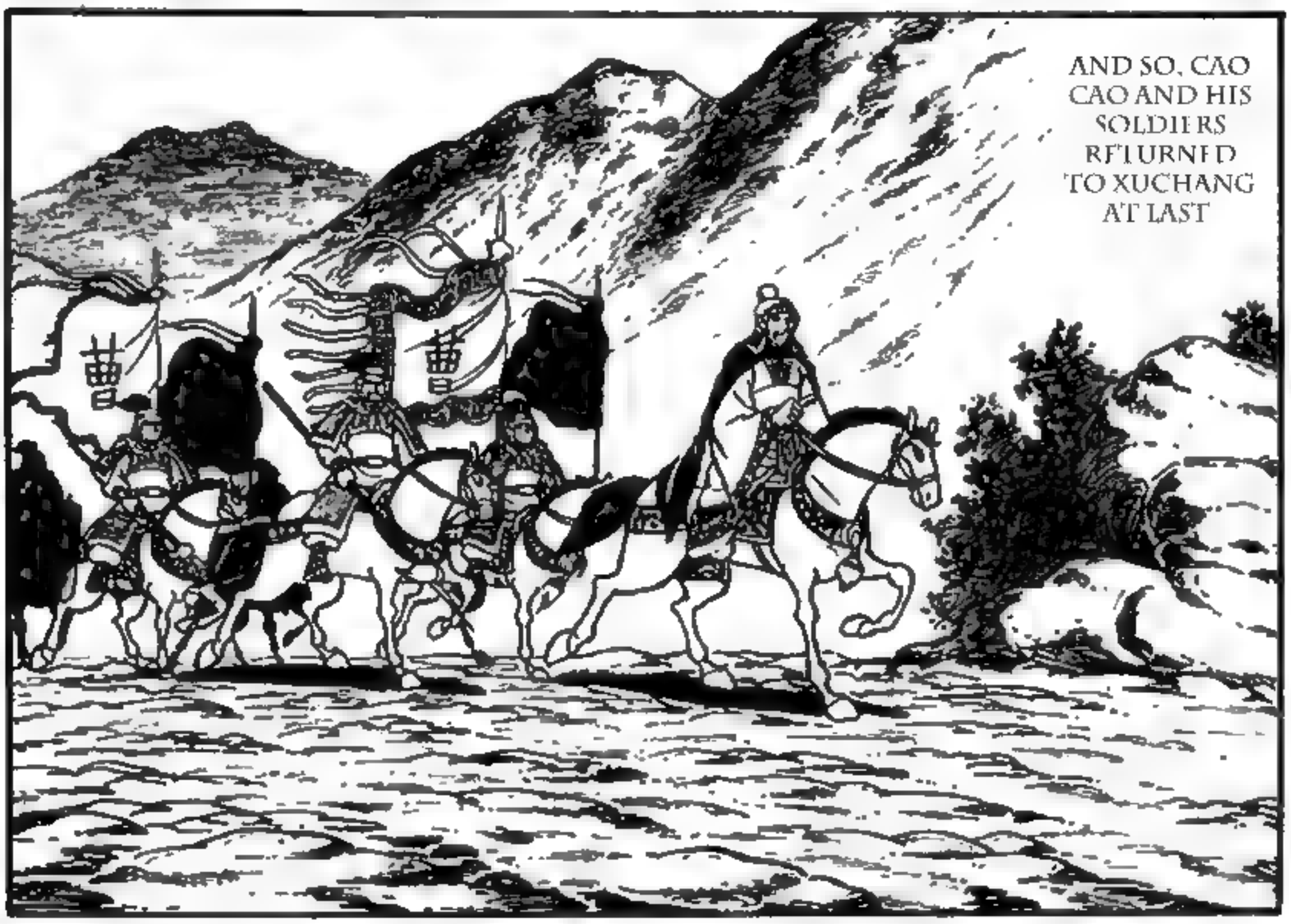
I UNDERSTAND THAT PERFECTLY WELL. HOWEVER, THE REALITY IS THAT THERE ARE MUCH BIGGER EMBERS CALLED LIU BEI AND SUN QUAN.

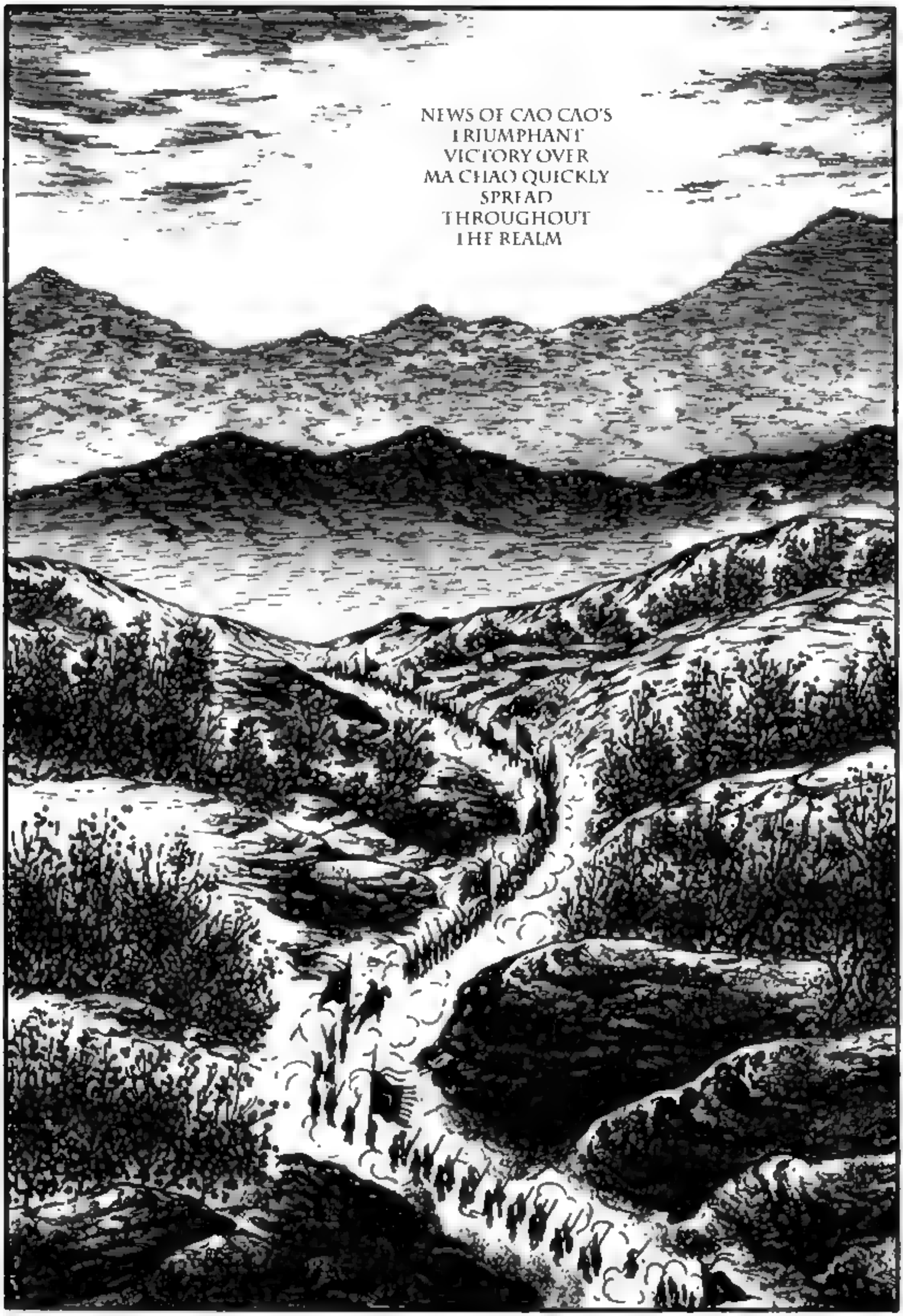
YES?

XIAHOU YUAN.

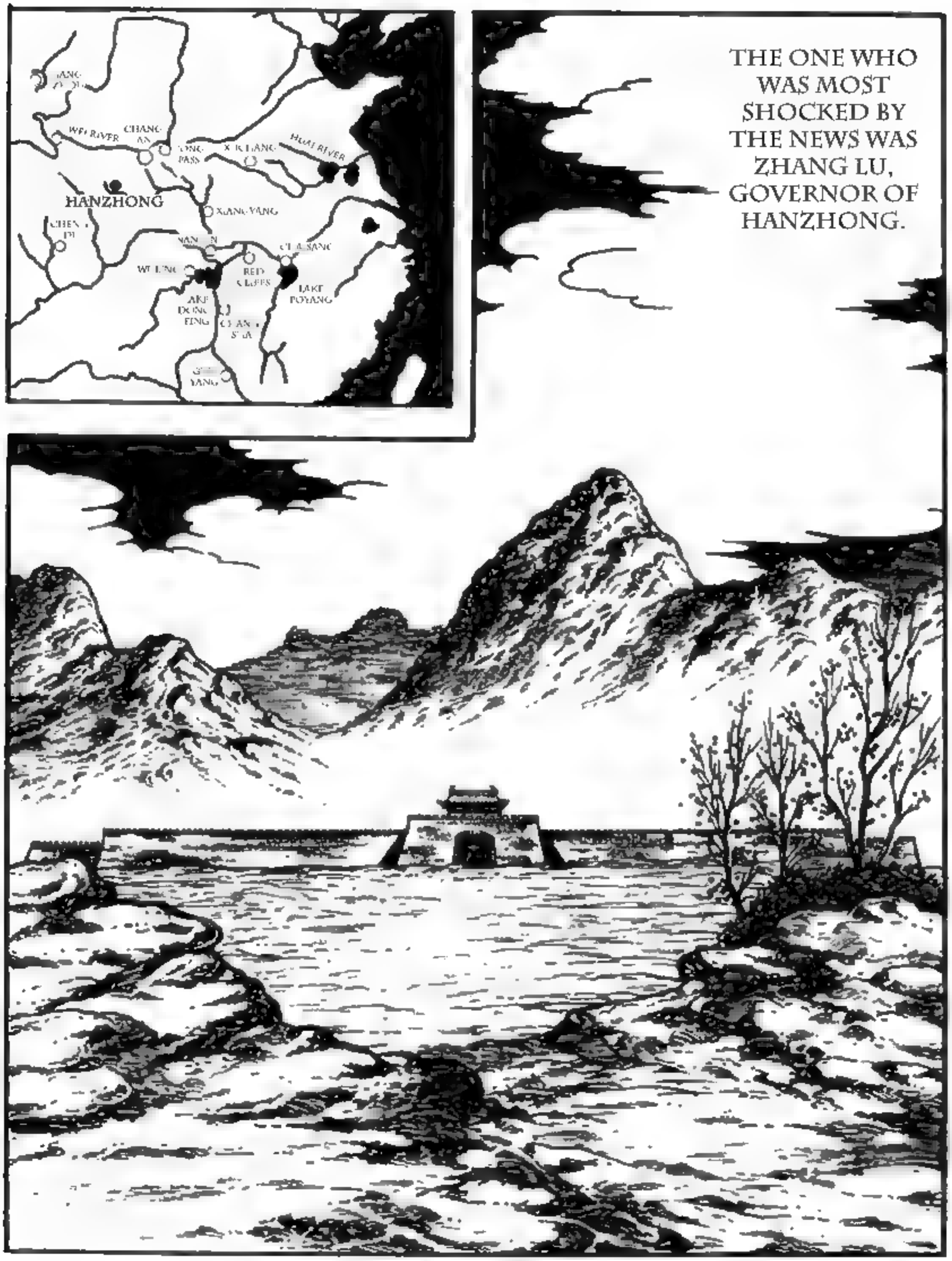
FOR THE TIME BEING, I WILL LEAVE MORE SOLDIERS BEHIND IN CHANG'AN AND FORTIFY OUR DEFENCES THERE.

YES, SIR.
ALTHOUGH HAN SUI IS STILL IN XILIANG, I FEAR HE WON'T BE AS CAPABLE NOW THAT HE LOST HIS ARM. THEREFORE, I LEAVE CHANG'AN IN YOUR CAPABLE HANDS.
THE REST OF YOU SHALL RETURN TO THE CAPITAL WITH ME!


AND SO, CAO CAO AND HIS SOLDIERS RETURNED TO XUCHANG AT LAST


NEWS OF CAO CAO'S
TRIUMPHANT
VICTORY OVER
MA CHAO QUICKLY
SPREAD
THROUGHOUT
THE REALM

DAOIST STATE HANZHONG



THE ONE WHO WAS MOST SHOCKED BY THE NEWS WAS ZHANG LU, GOVERNOR OF HANZHONG.

HANZHONG, ALSO KNOWN AS HANNING, WAS A STATE RUN BY THE DAOIST SECT CALLED WAY OF "THE CELESTIAL MASTERS."

ZHANG LU, AS THE 3RD-GENERATION CELESTIAL MASTER, WAS KNOWN AS "THE LORD-PRECEPTOR.

HIS FOLLOWERS WERE CALLED "SPIRIT TROOPS,"

THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THEM WERE CALLED HEAD-LIBATIONERS. THESE WERE PURELY RELIGIOUS RANKS AND THEY TOOK NO PART IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE.

AND AMONG THEM, THE HEADS WERE CALLED LIBATIONERS.

SINCERITY WAS THE FUNDAMENTAL TENET OF THEIR RELIGION.

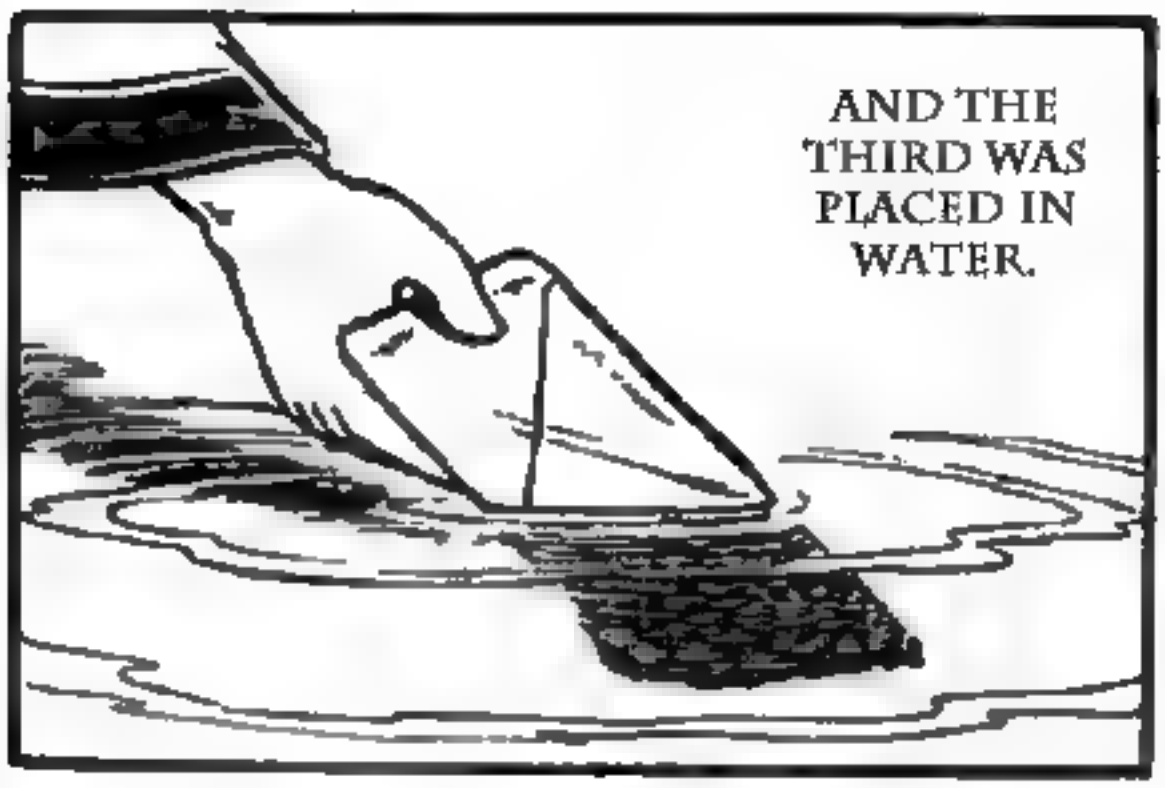
ONLY AFTER DOING SO WAS A PRAYER THEN PLACED FOR THE SOUL OF THE SICK MAN.

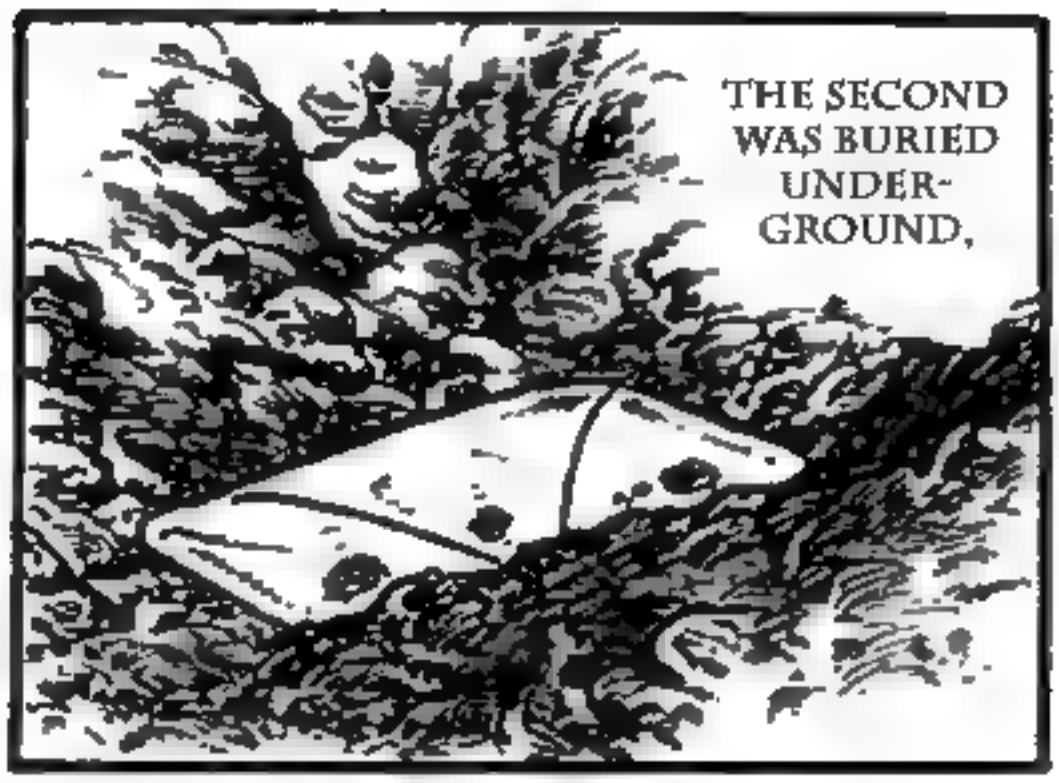
WHEN A MAN BECAME SICK, HE WAS FIRST LED INTO A QUIET ROOM WHERE HE COULD CONFESS AND REFLECT UPON HIS PAST SINS.

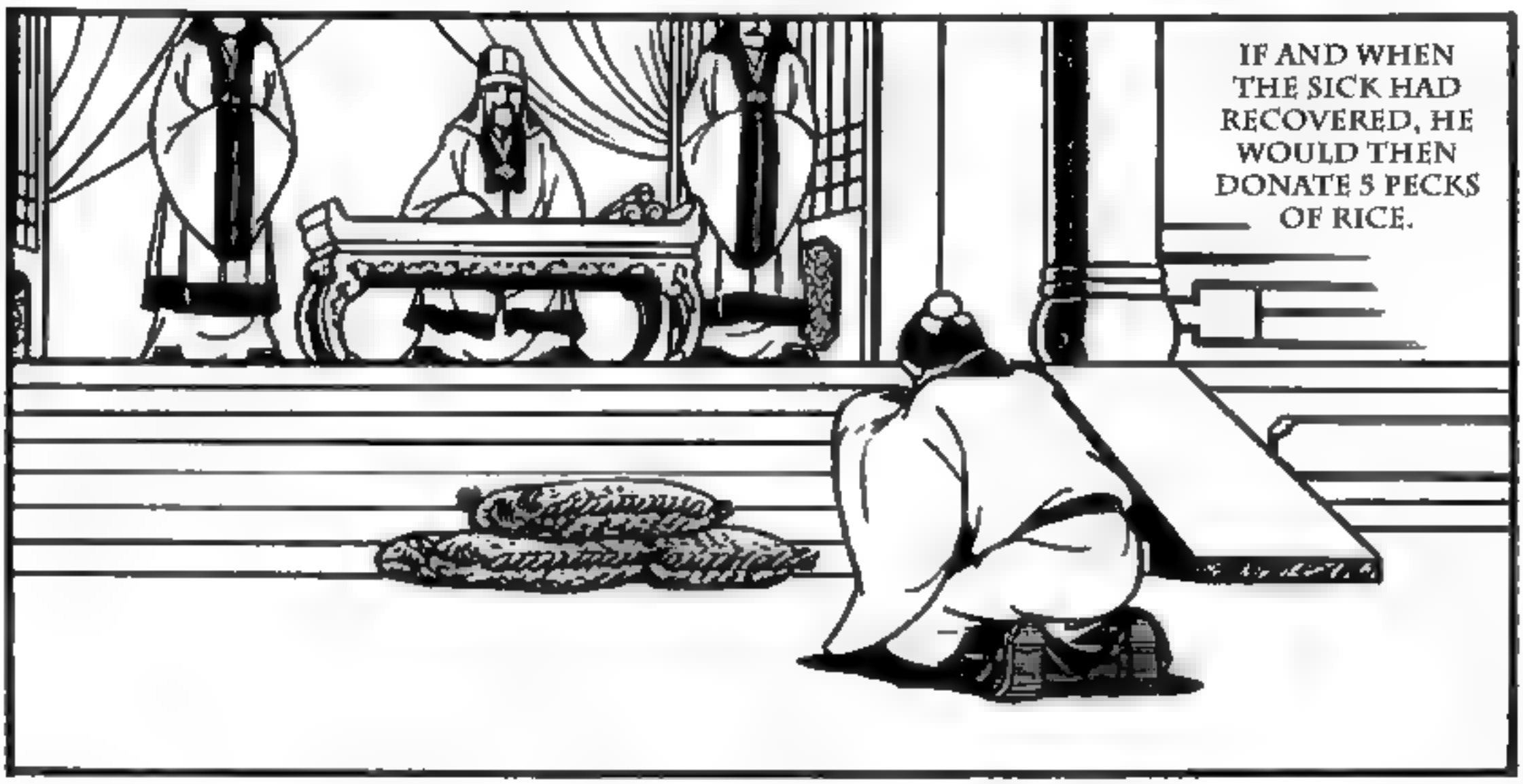
THE PRAYER WAS KNOWN AS THE "PETITION TO THE THREE REALMS," AND OCCURRED IN THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

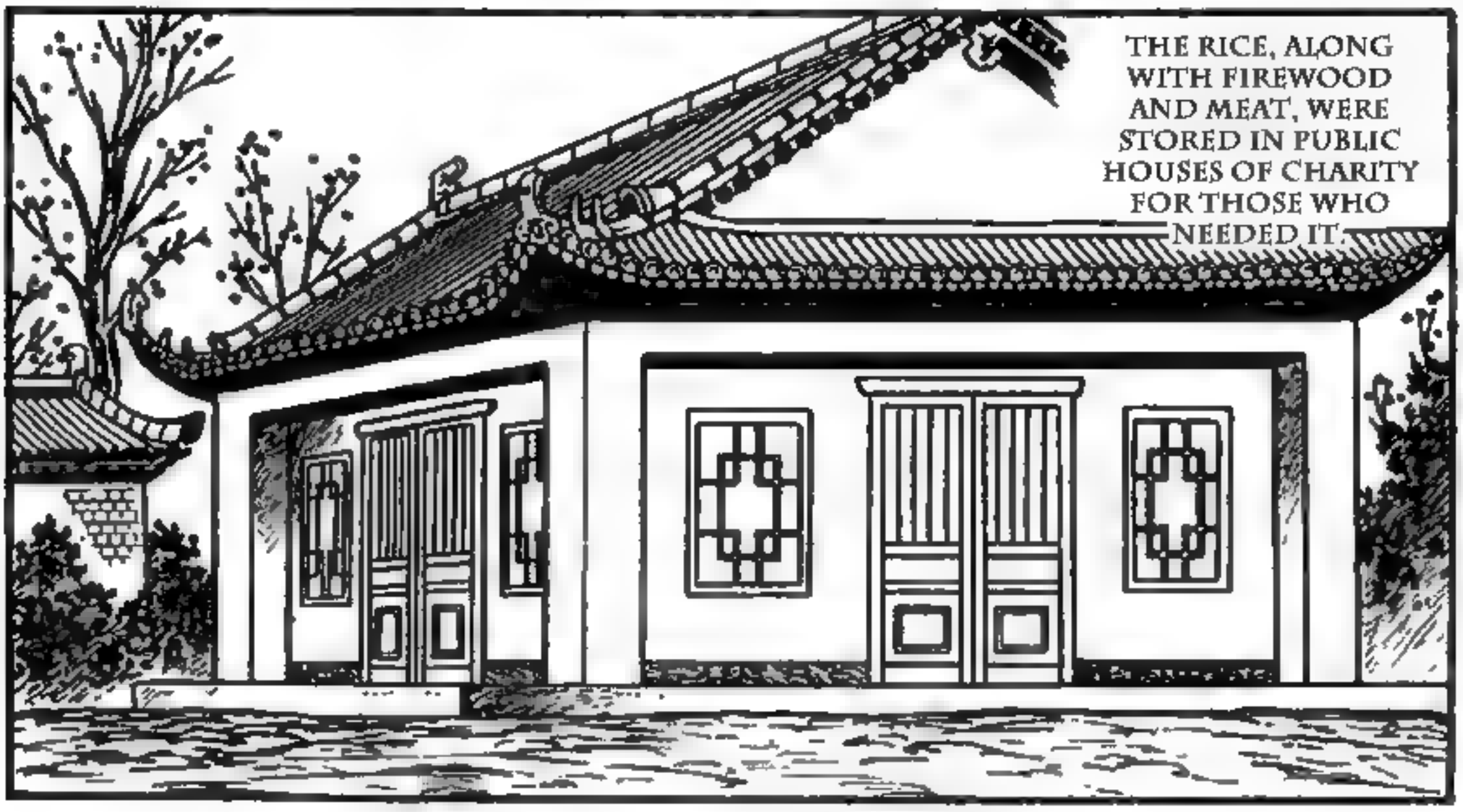
FIRST, THE FULL NAME AND PENANCE OF THE SICK INDIVIDUAL WAS WRITTEN ON THREE IDENTICAL LETTERS.

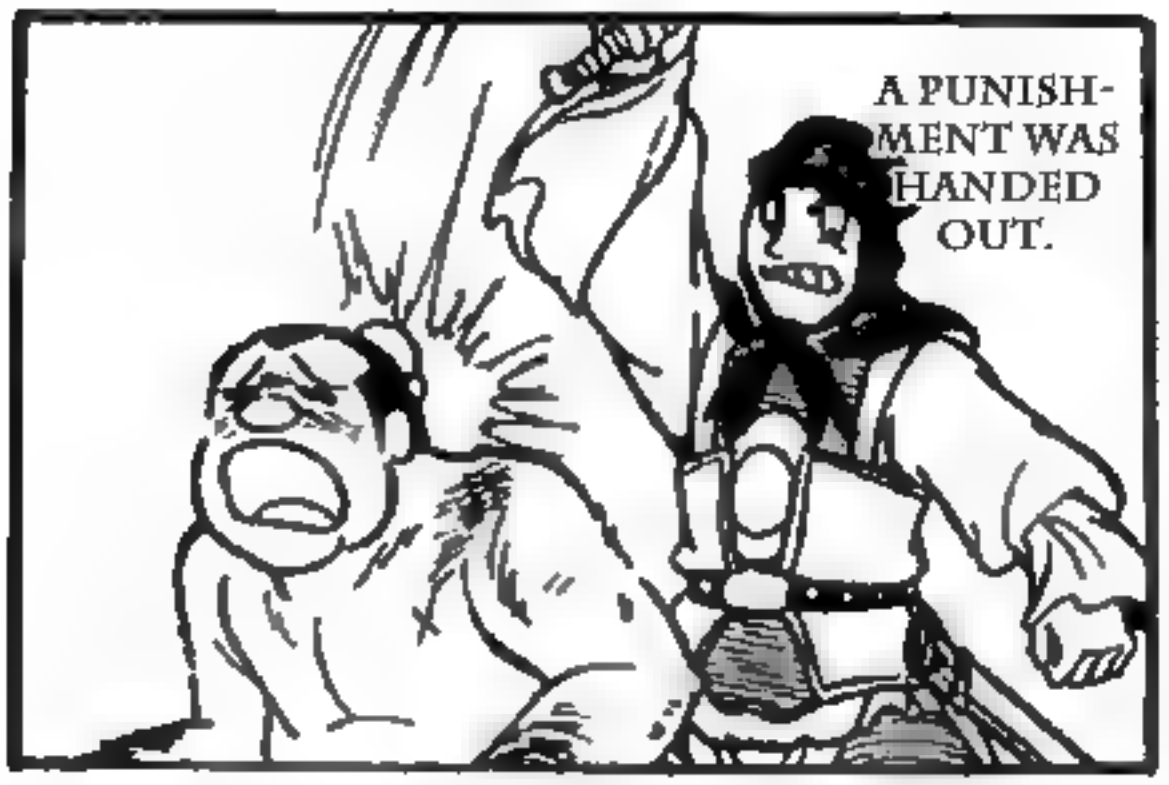
ONE LETTER WAS PLACED ON TOP OF THE HILLS.

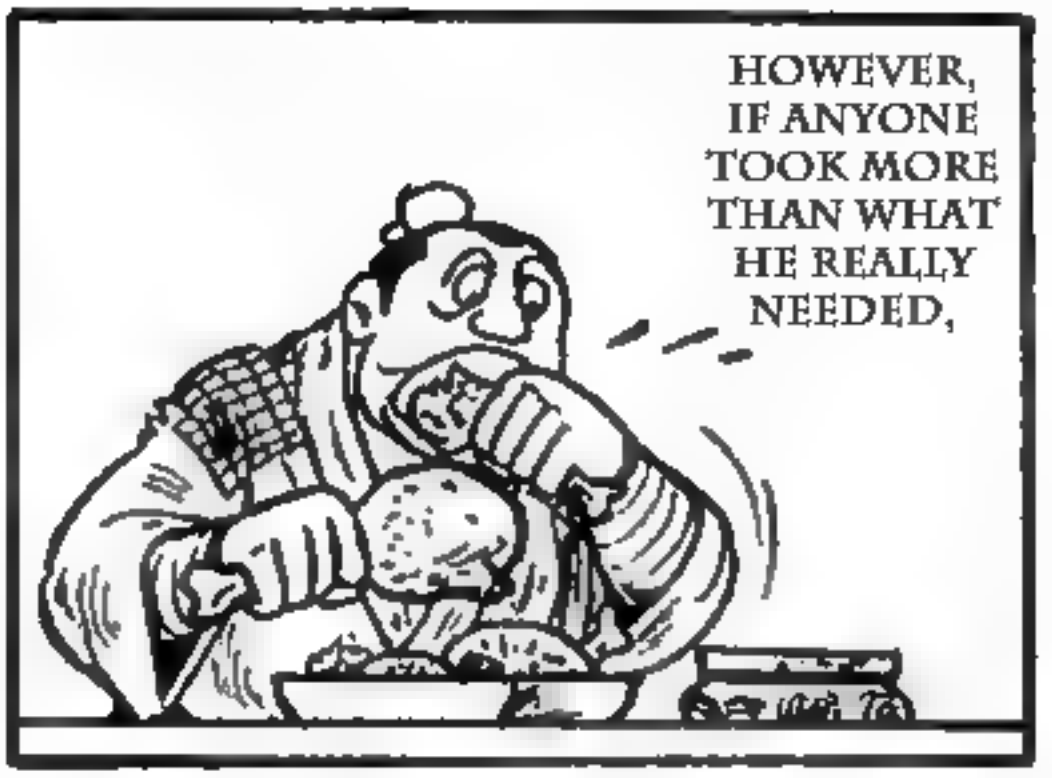

AND THE THIRD WAS PLACED IN WATER.

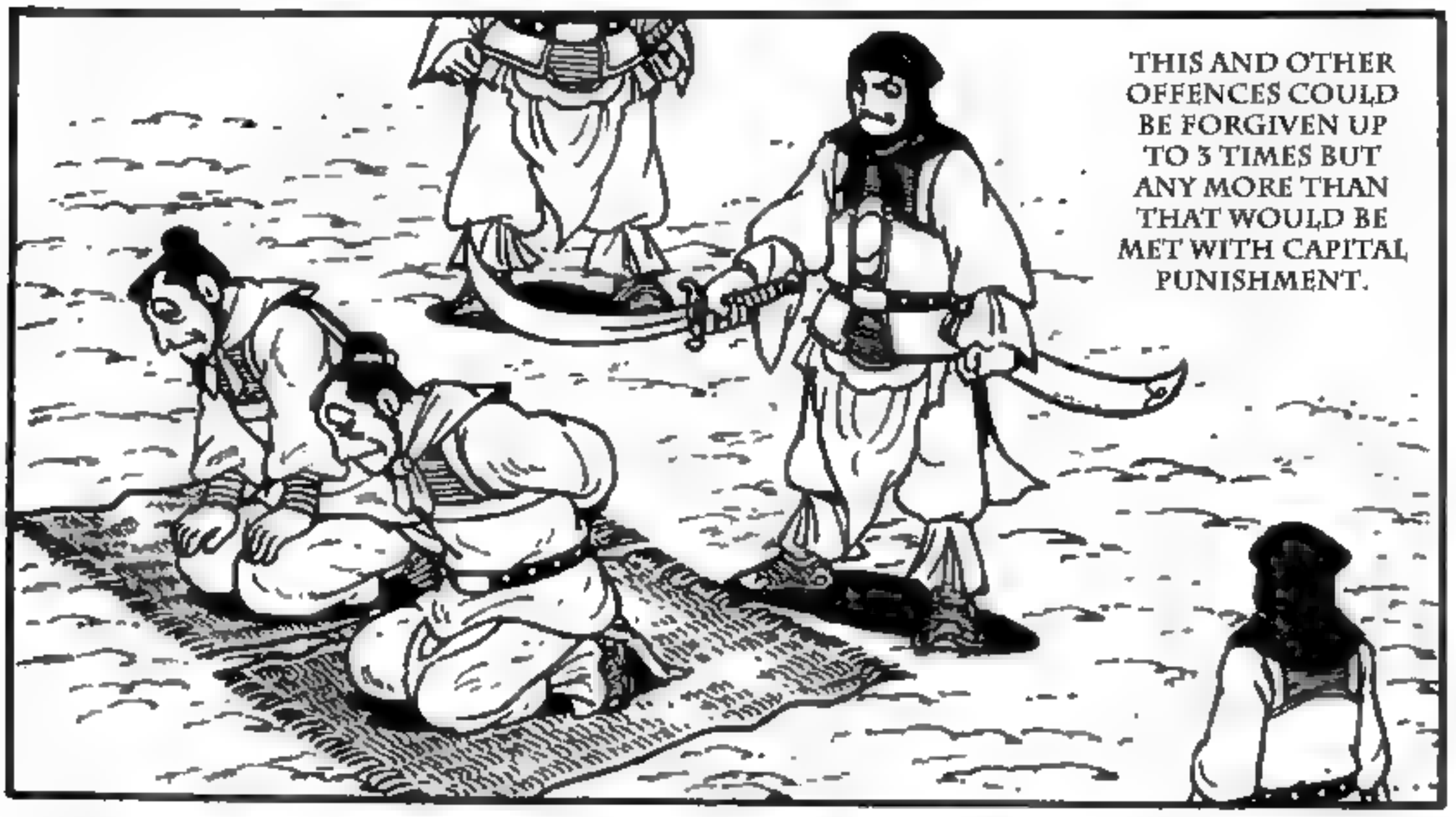

THE SECOND WAS BURIED UNDER-GROUND,

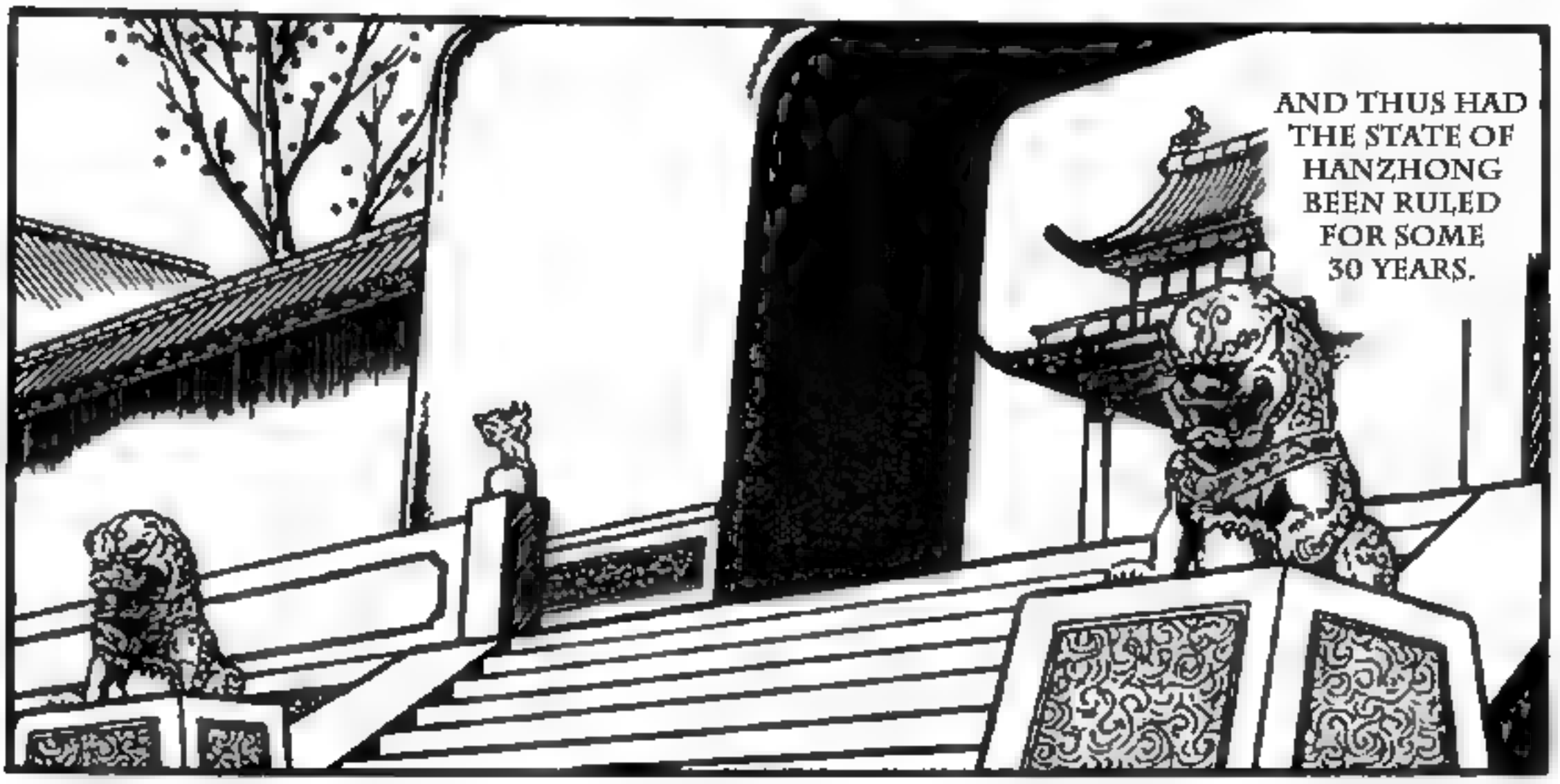

IF AND WHEN THE SICK HAD RECOVERED, HE WOULD THEN DONATE 5 PECKS OF RICE.


THE RICE, ALONG WITH FIREWOOD AND MEAT, WERE STORED IN PUBLIC HOUSES OF CHARITY FOR THOSE WHO NEEDED IT.


A PUNISH-
MENT WAS
HANDED
OUT.


HOWEVER,
IF ANYONE
TOOK MORE
THAN WHAT
HE REALLY
NEEDED,


THIS AND OTHER
OFFENCES COULD
BE FORGIVEN UP
TO 3 TIMES BUT
ANY MORE THAN
THAT WOULD BE
MET WITH CAPITAL
PUNISHMENT.


AND THUS HAD
THE STATE OF
HANZHONG
BEEN RULED
FOR SOME
30 YEARS.

THE MAIN REASON WHY THE IMPERIAL COURT HAD NOT YET BOTHERED TO SUPRESS THIS UNUSUAL RELIGION WAS THAT IT WAS TOO REMOVED FROM THE INTERIOR OF THE REALM AND ACCESS WAS FAR FROM CONVENIENT.

THE COURT THUS ADOPTED A MORE PRACTICAL SOLUTION BY AWARDING ZHANG LU WITH THE TITLES IMPERIAL PROTECTOR OF HANZHONG AND "GENERAL WHO GUARDS THE SOUTH" IN RETURN FOR A MODEST YEARLY TRIBUTE.

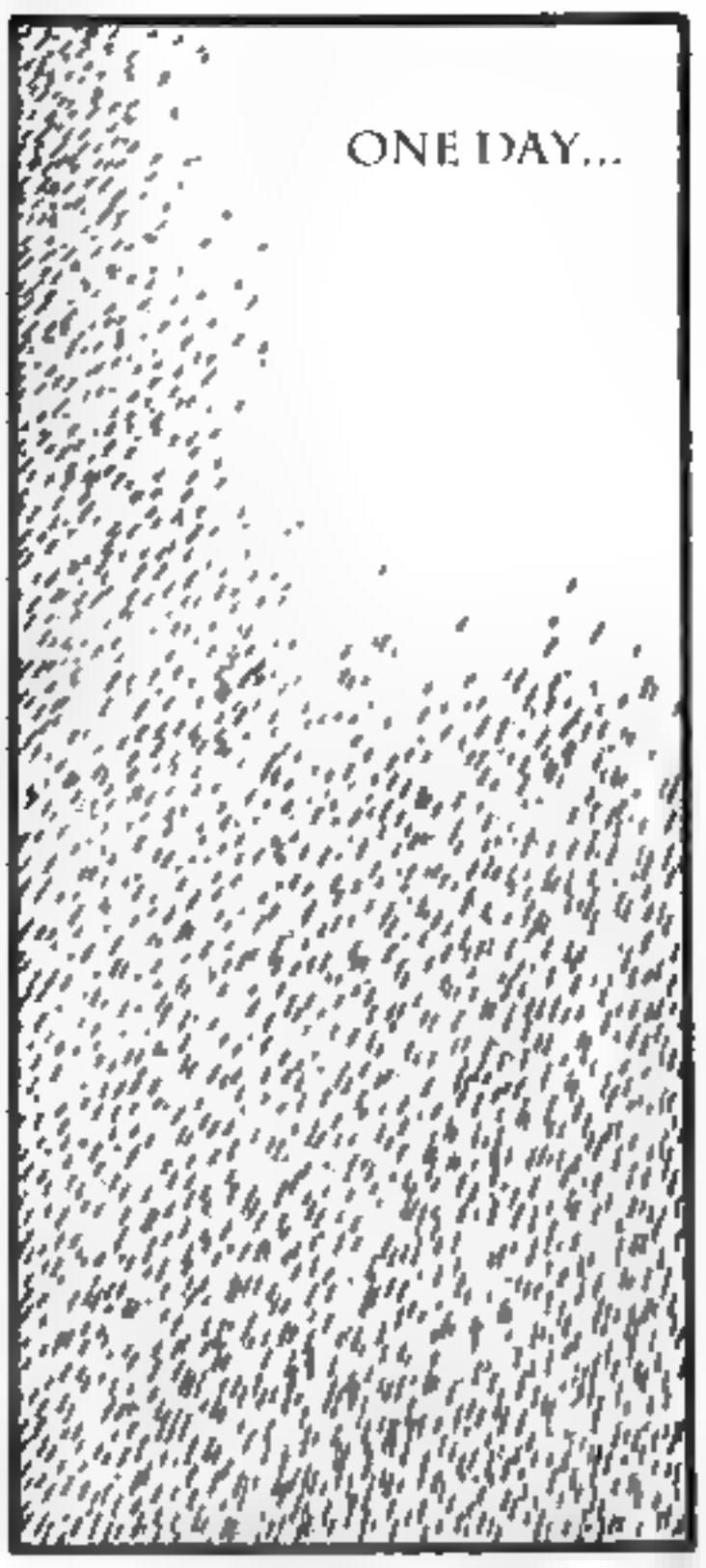
CONSIDERING THAT WE HAD MAINTAINED FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH MA TENG AND XILIANG UNTIL NOW, I FEAR SO TOO, LORD-PRECEPTOR.

I FEAR CAO CAO WILL SEEK TO CONQUER THIS STATE NOW THAT HE HAS TAKEN CARE OF XILIANG.

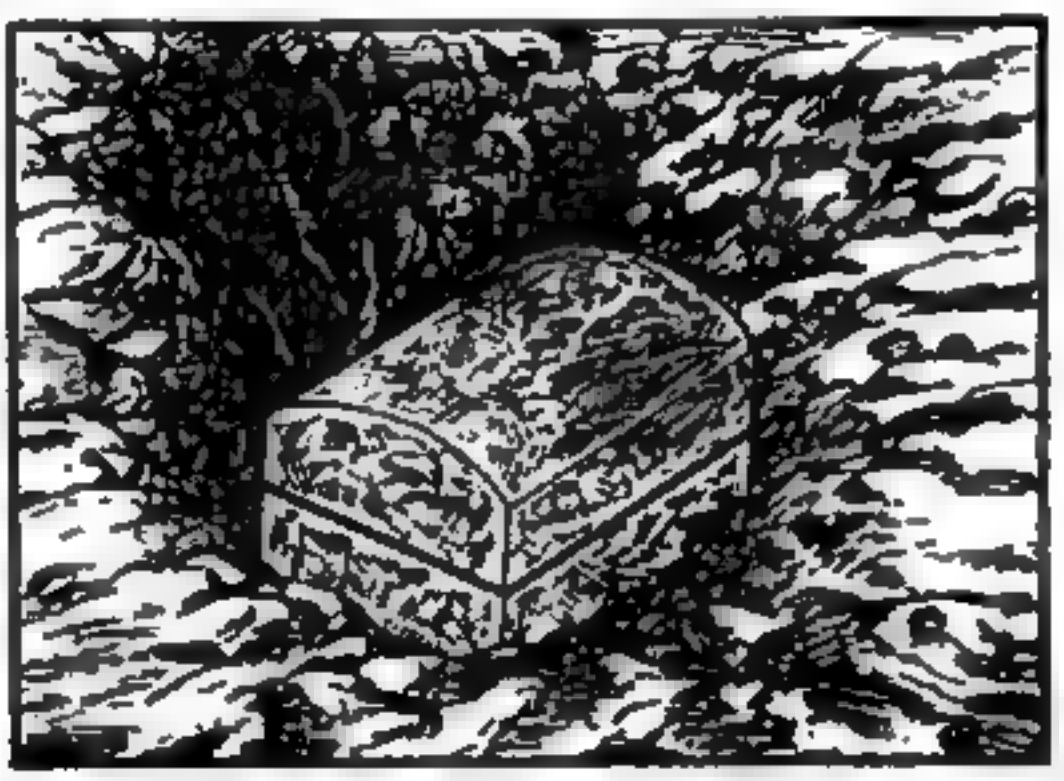
MN...

WE MUST START THINKING ABOUT HOW TO MEET THE UPCOMING INVASION.

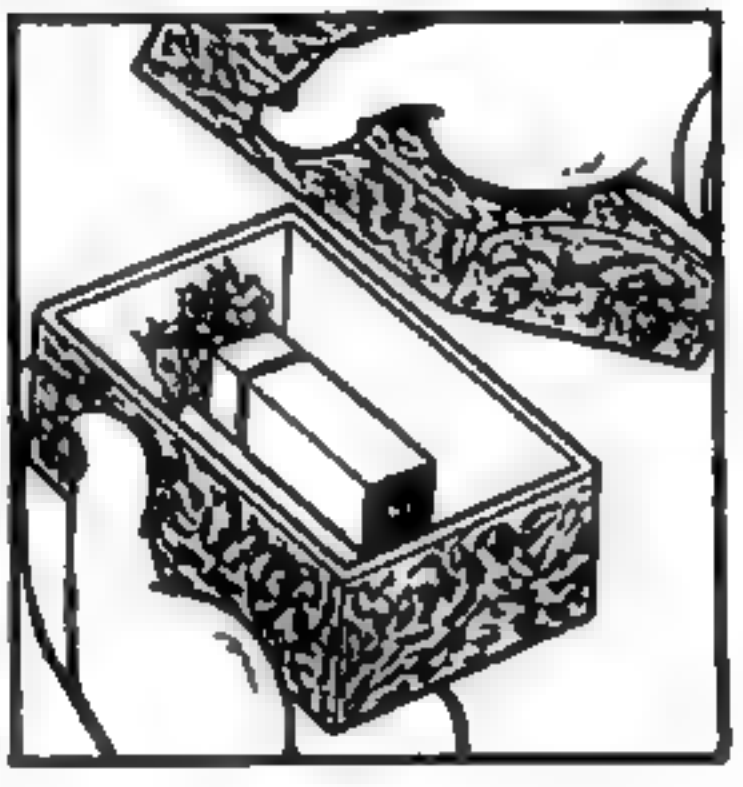
HM?

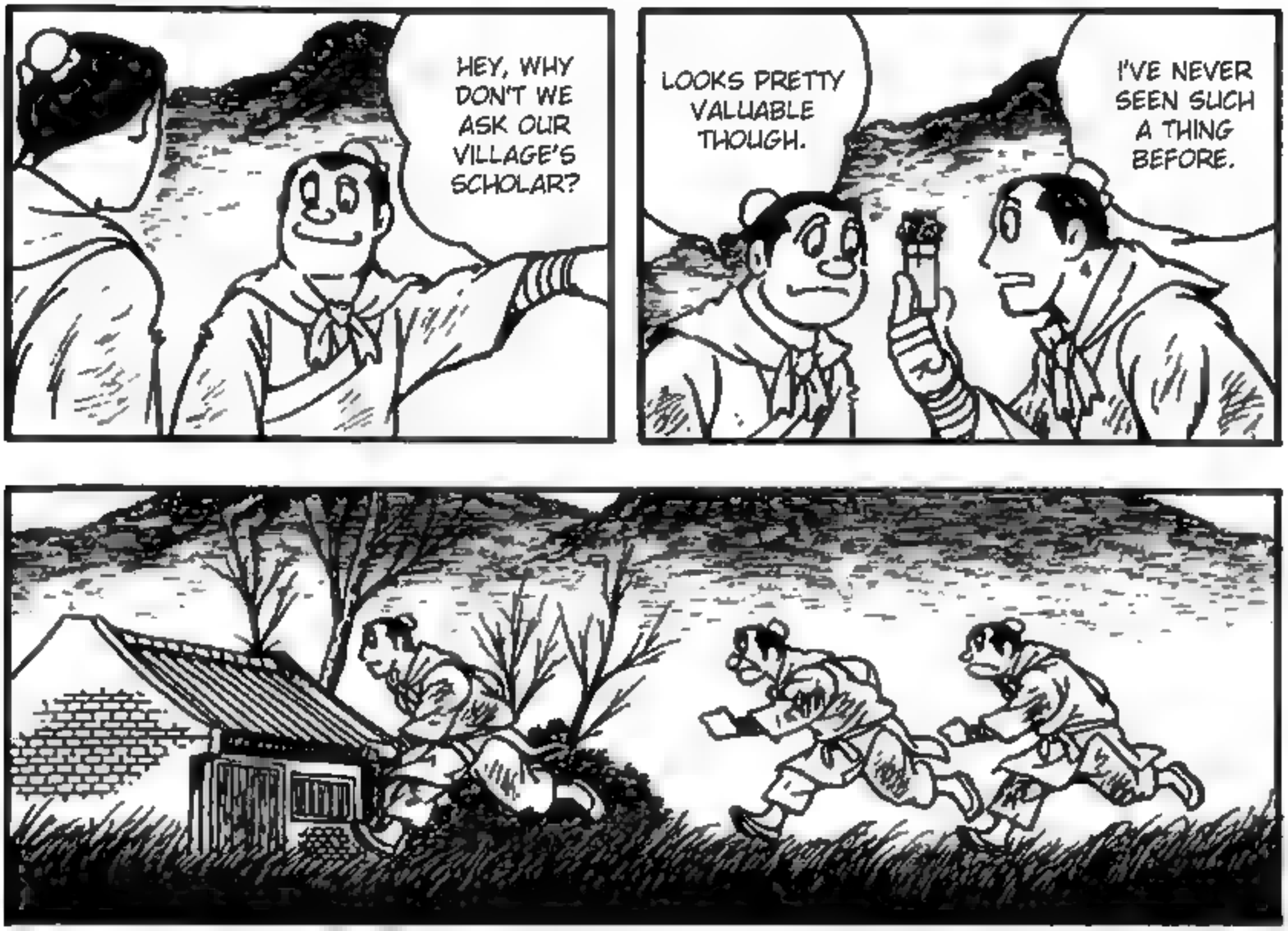

ONE DAY...

WHAT'S THIS?



ANYBODY KNOW WHAT THIS IS?




HEY, WHY DON'T WE ASK OUR VILLAGE'S SCHOLAR?
LOOKS PRETTY VALUABLE THOUGH.
I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH A THING BEFORE.
WHAT IS IT?
TEACHER, ARE YOU HOME?

I FOUND THIS WHILE TILLING MY FIELDS. DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS?

A JADE SEAL?

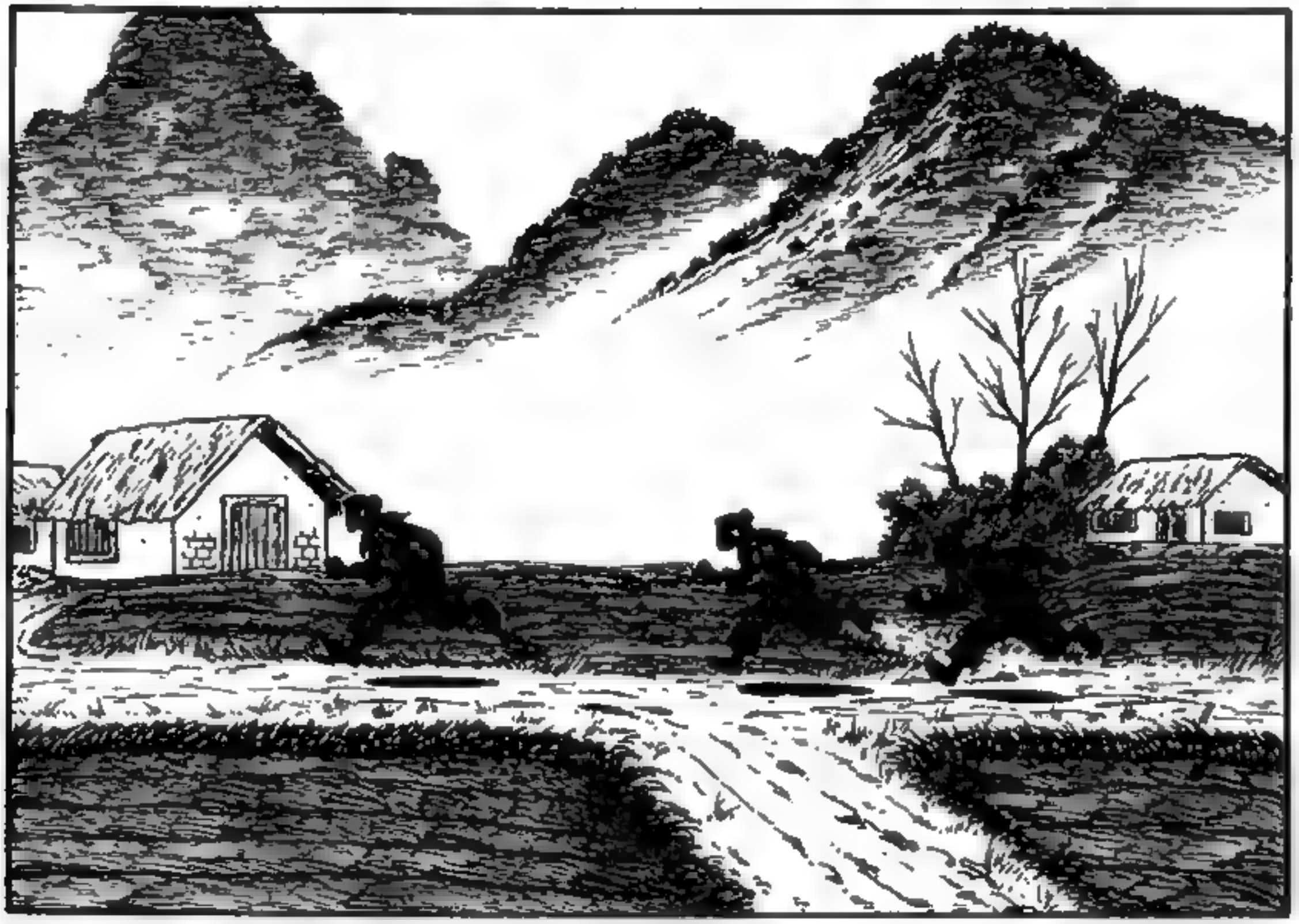
T-THIS IS A JADE SEAL!

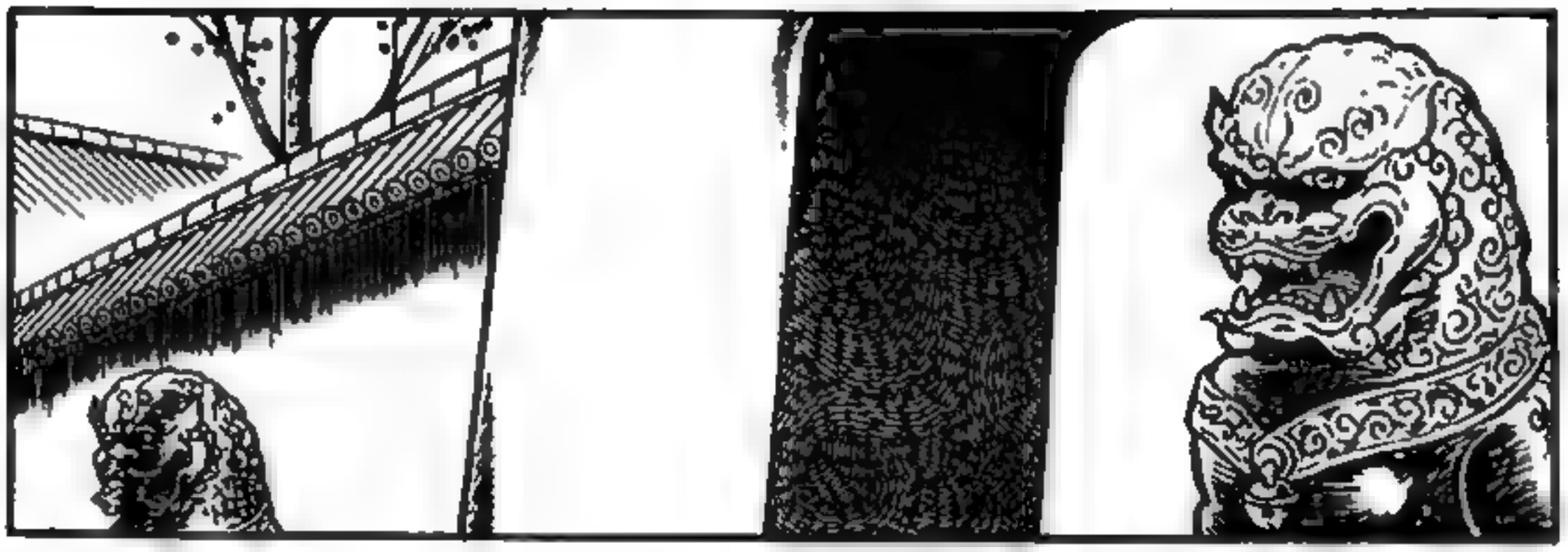
SO IT'S *THAT* VALUABLE?
OHHH!
YES, IT'S A SEAL USED ONLY BY KINGS OR EMPERORS.

HEY, MAYBE IT'S A SIGN FROM THE HEAVENS THAT OUR LORD-PRECEPTOR SHOULD BECOME EMPEROR!

I CAN'T BELIEVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS WAS BURIED HERE IN HANZHONG.

MAYBE IT IS! I'LL GO PRESENT THIS TO THE LORD-PRECEPTOR RIGHT AWAY.





SURELY, THIS IS HEAVEN'S SIGN FOR YOU TO DECLARE HANZHONG AN INDEPENDENT REALM AND BECOME ITS FIRST KING!

YES, THIS IS INDEED A JADE SEAL.

CERTAINLY, IT WOULD BE ALRIGHT FOR OUR LORD-PRECEPTOR TO BECOME KING OF HANZHONG.

WAIT JUST A MOMENT, I SAY.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

BUT IT WON'T BE TOO LATE TO DO SO ONLY AFTER STRENGTHEN-ING OUR STATE FIRST.

HMM.

HANZHONG MAY ONLY NUMBER 100,000 HOUSEHOLDS RIGHT NOW BUT ITS LAND IS RICH. WITH MA CHAO'S RECENT DEFEAT, THERE WILL SURELY BE SEVERAL THOUSAND XILIANG REFUGEES TO COME HERE SOON AND SWELL OUR ARMY. IF OUR INDEPENDENCY IS TO BE PROCLAIMED AND DEFENDED FROM THE LIKES OF CAO CAO, WE MUST FIRST TAKE OVER THE 41 COUNTIES OF SHU.

YES. THE CURRENT LORD OF SHU, LIU ZHANG, IS BUT A MERE FOOLISH COWARD.

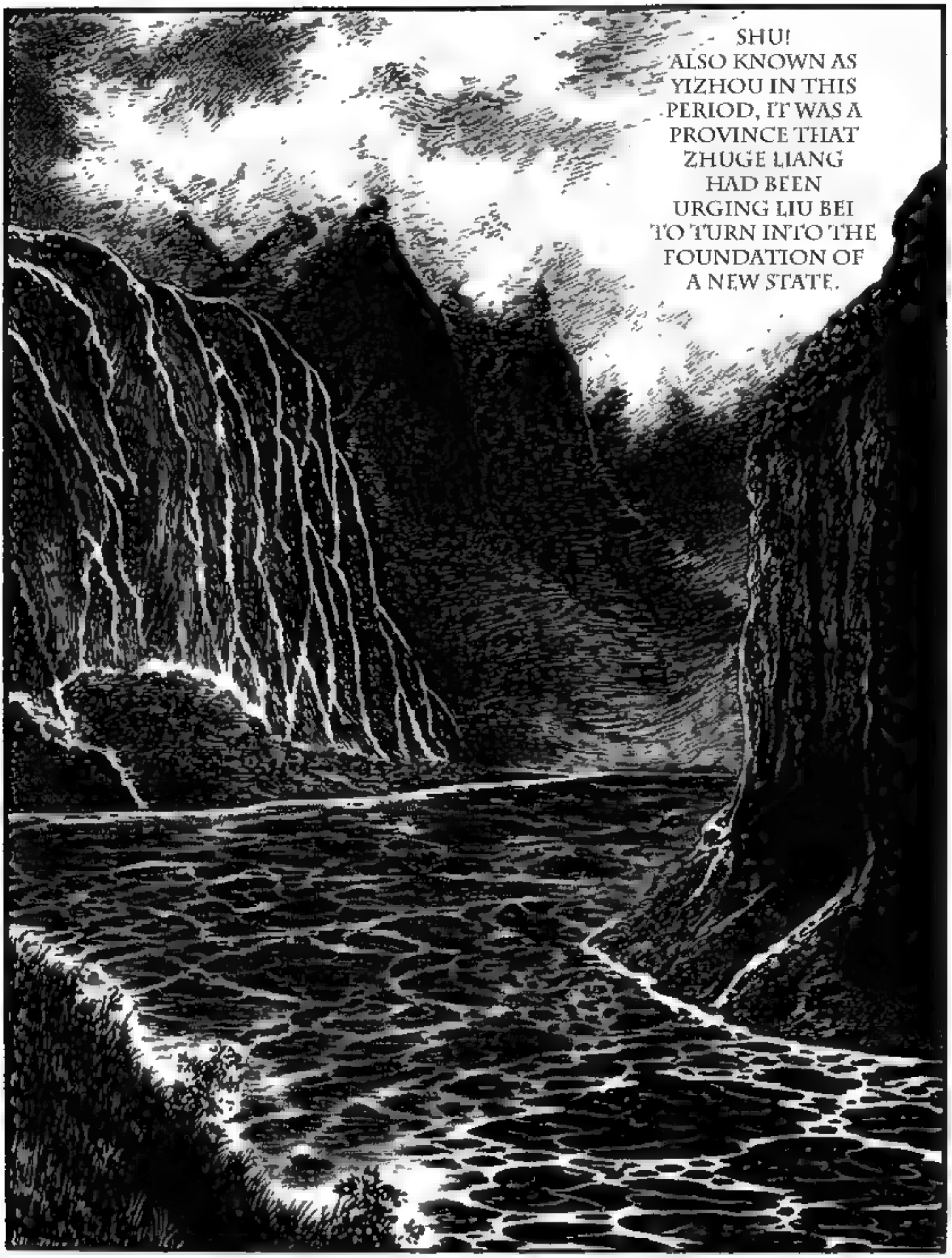
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT CAN BE DONE THOUGH?

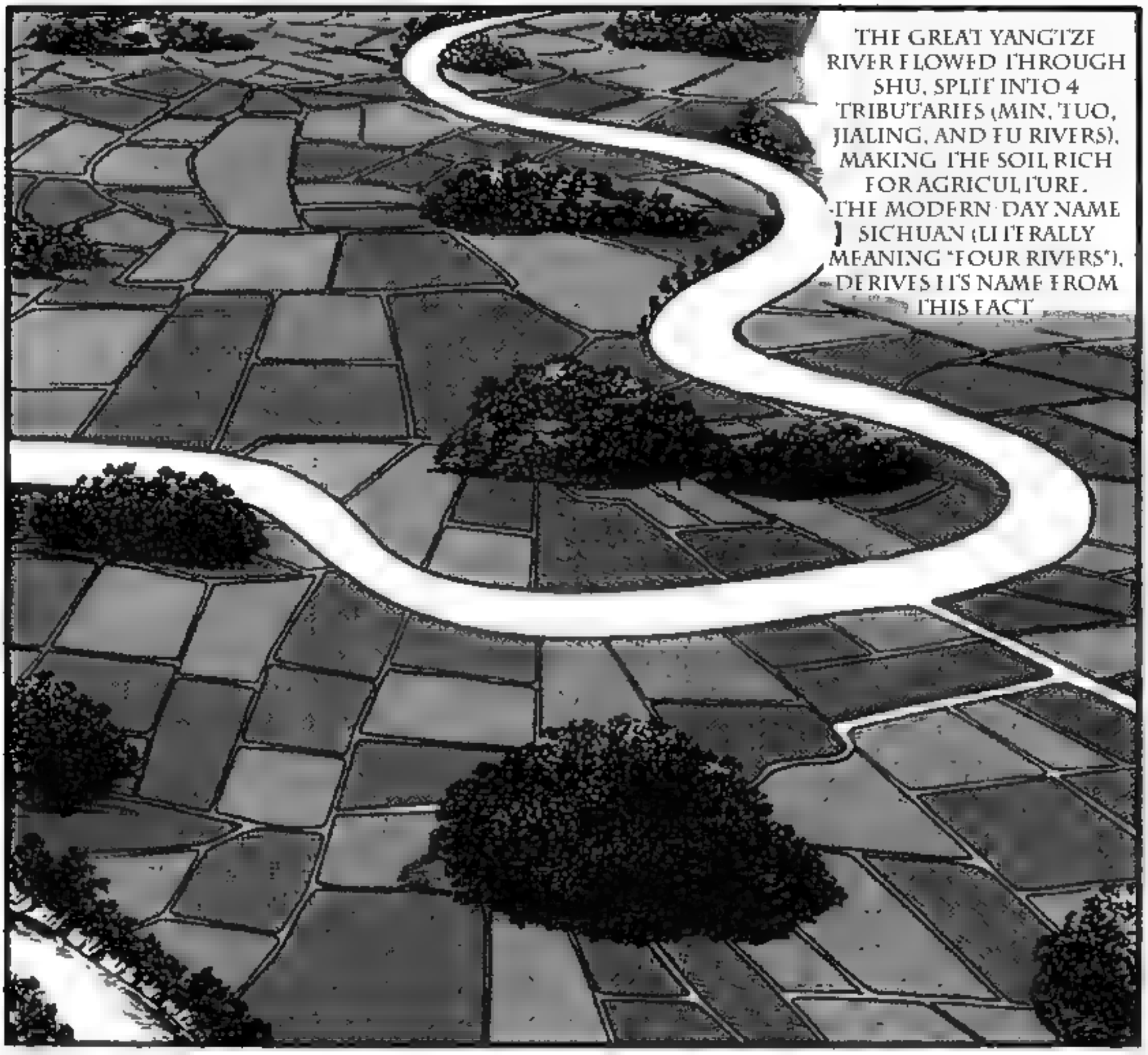
HMM... CERTAINLY, WE WOULD BECOME QUITE POWERFUL IF WE WERE TO INTEGRATE SHU'S TERRITORIES...

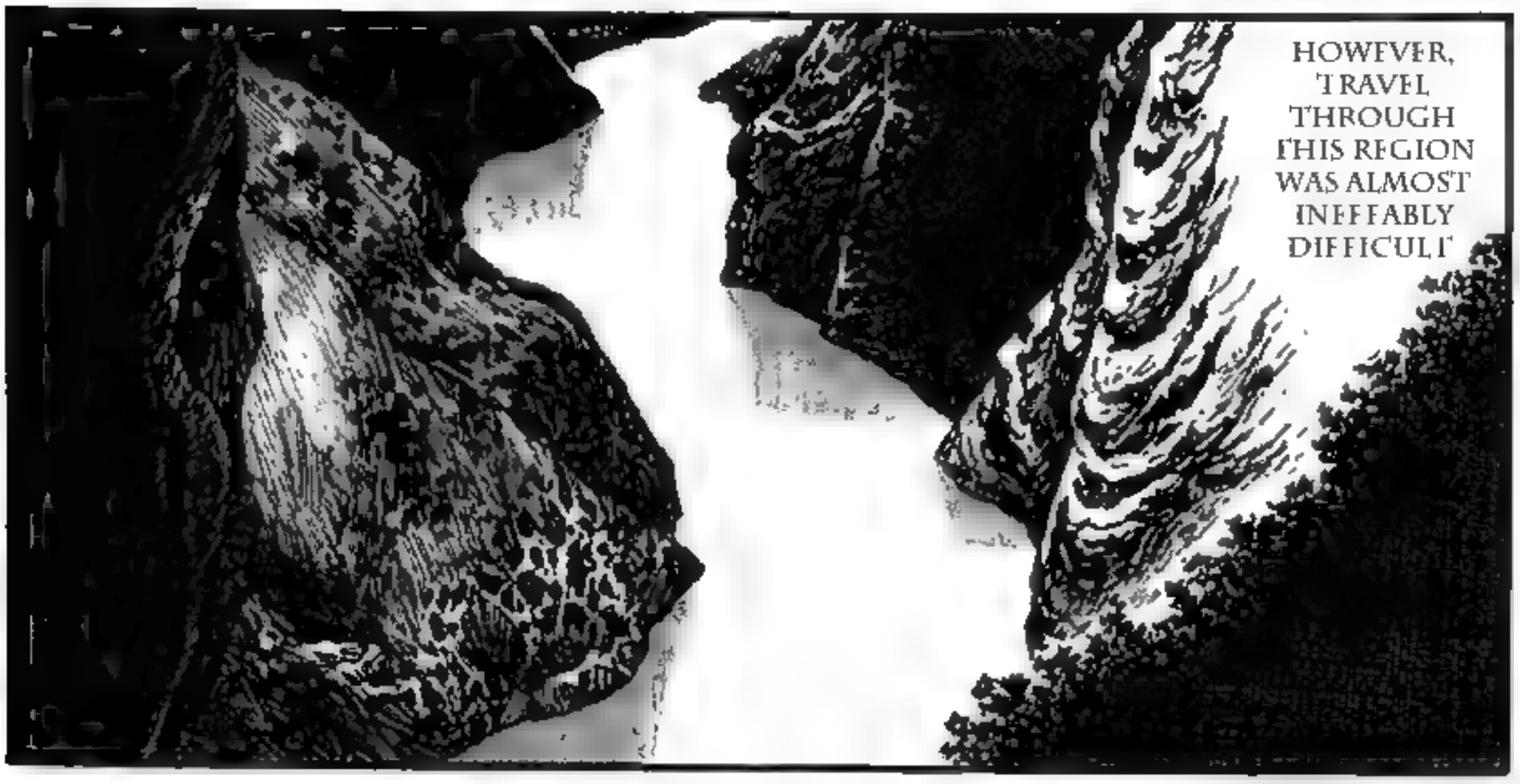
VERY WELL THEN! LET US MAKE PREPA-RATIONS TO INVADE SHU!

AT ONCE.

SHU

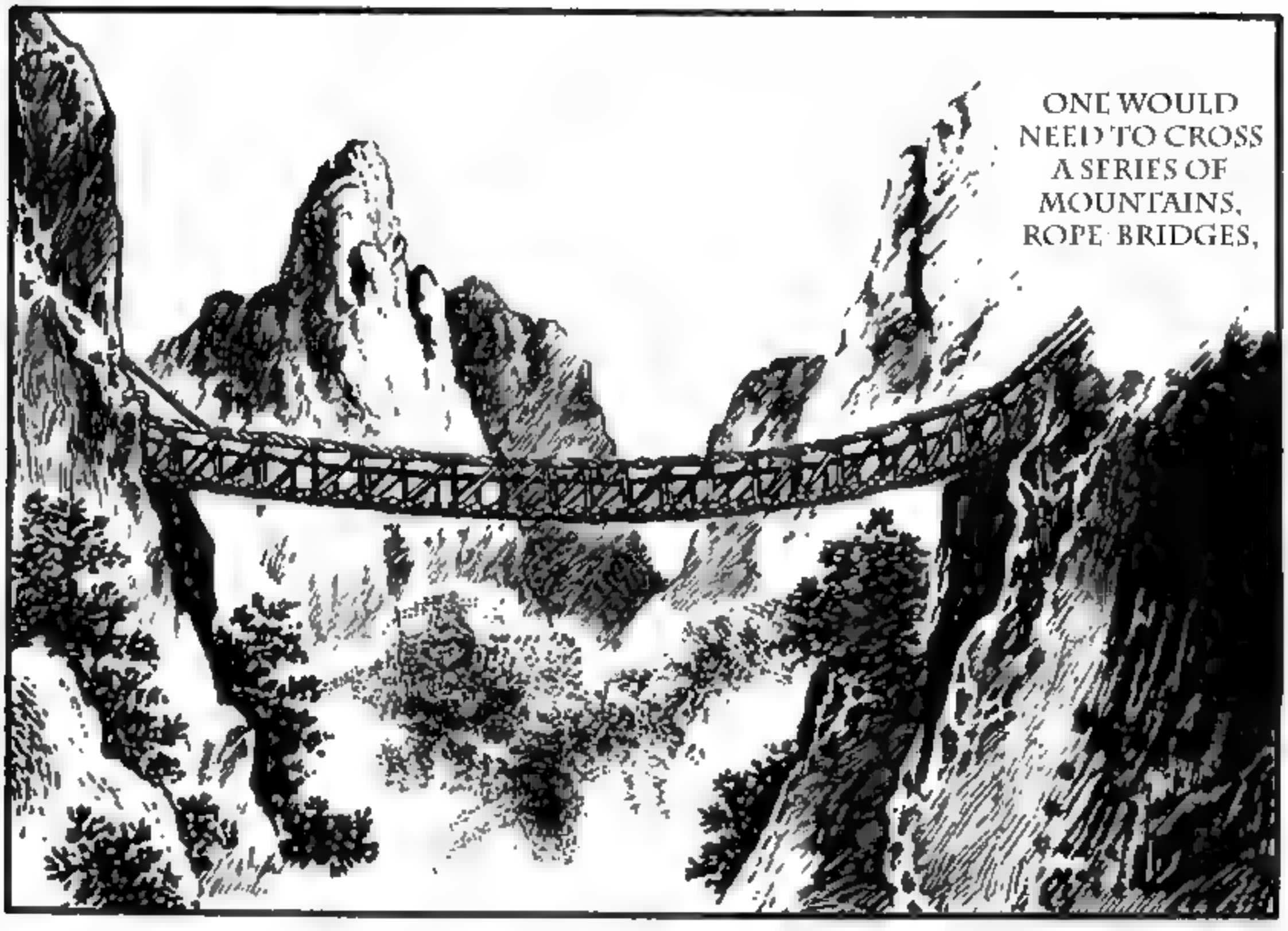

SHU!
ALSO KNOWN AS YIZHOU IN THIS PERIOD, IT WAS A PROVINCE THAT ZHUGE LIANG HAD BEEN URGING LIU BEI TO TURN INTO THE FOUNDATION OF A NEW STATE.

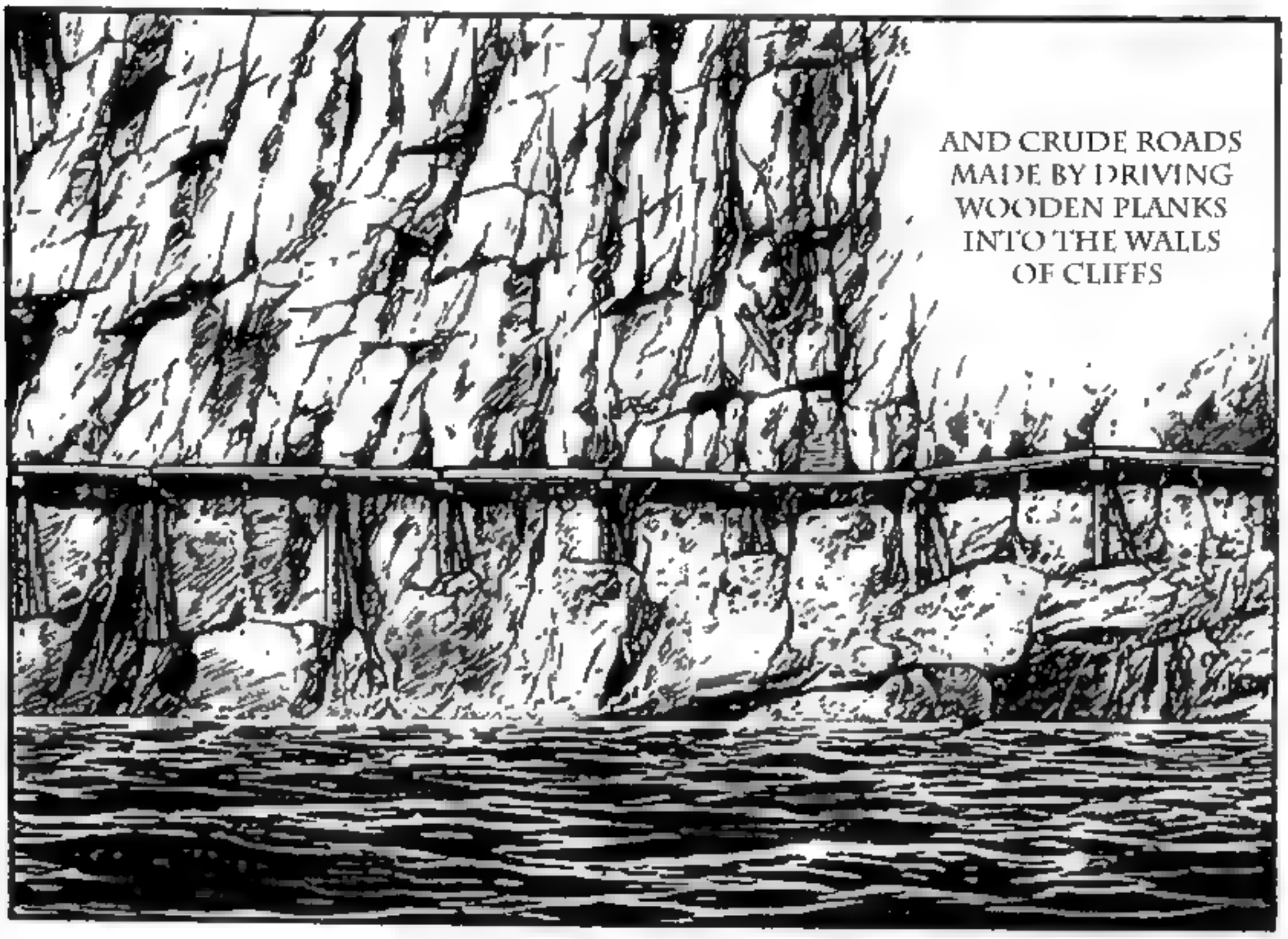

THE GREAT YANGTZE RIVER FLOWED THROUGH SHU, SPLIT INTO 4 TRIBUTARIES (MIN, TUO, JIALING, AND FU RIVERS), MAKING THE SOIL RICH FOR AGRICULTURE.
-THE MODERN DAY NAME SICHUAN (LITERALLY MEANING "FOUR RIVERS"), DERIVES IT'S NAME FROM THIS FACT

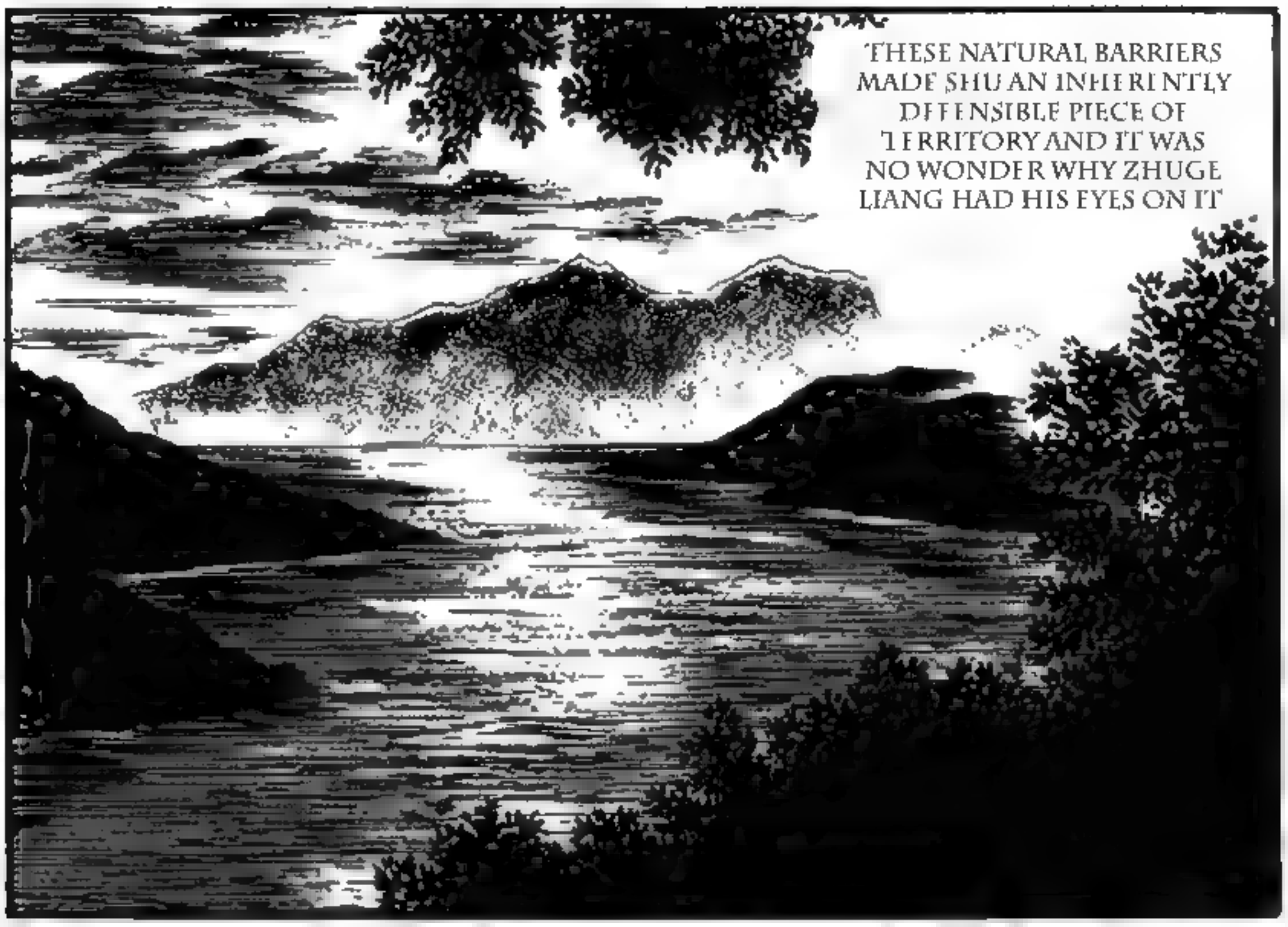

HOWEVER, TRAVEL THROUGH THIS REGION WAS ALMOST INEFFABLY DIFFICULT

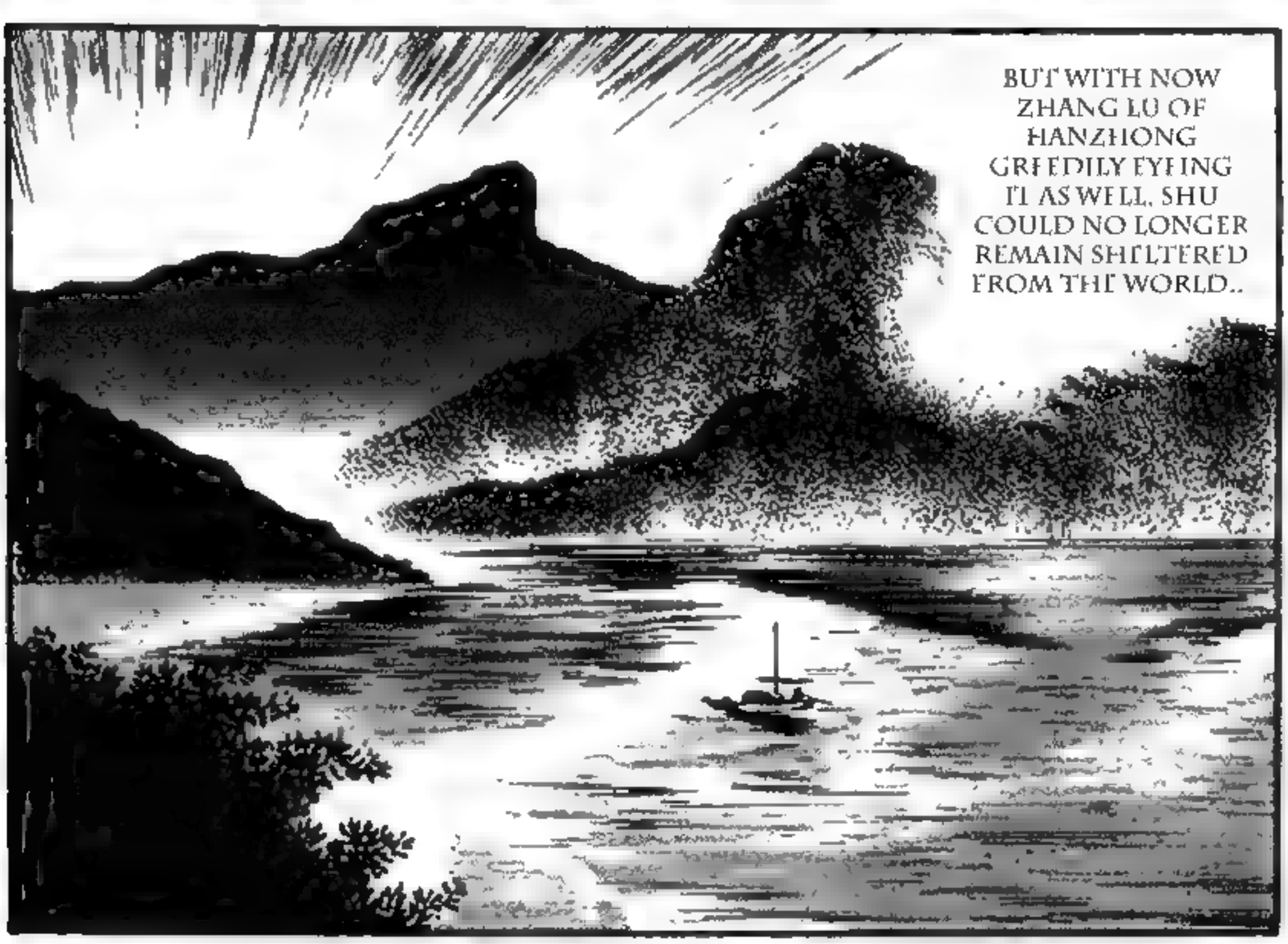
ACCESS FROM
BOTH THE
NORTH AND
THE SOUTH
WERE BLOCKED
OFF BY STEEP
MOUNTAINS.

SUCH AS
THE DABA
MOUNTAIN
RANGE OR
LONGMEN
MOUNTAINS


ONE WOULD
NEED TO CROSS
A SERIES OF
MOUNTAINS,
ROPE BRIDGES,


AND CRUDE ROADS
MADE BY DRIVING
WOODEN PLANKS
INTO THE WALLS
OF CLIFFS


THESE NATURAL BARRIERS MADE SHU AN INHERENTLY DEFENSIBLE PIECE OF TERRITORY AND IT WAS NO WONDER WHY ZHUGE LIANG HAD HIS EYES ON IT


BUT WITH NOW ZHANG LU OF HANZHONG GREEDILY EYEING IT AS WELL, SHU COULD NO LONGER REMAIN SHELTERED FROM THE WORLD..

YES, MY LORD. THEY ARE QUICKLY MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR AN ATTACK IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

ARE YOU CERTAIN ZHANG LU OF HANZHONG INTENDS TO MOUNT AN INVASION?

WHAT MUST I DO THEN? FIGHT A BLOODY CONFLICT? OR SIMPLY HAND OVER THESE LANDS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF MY PEOPLE?

SO YOU THINK I SHOULD SURRENDER AND HOPE FOR THE BEST AS ZHANG LU'S VASSAL?

EVEN IF WE ARE TO FIGHT, OUR ARMIES ARE MUCH SMALLER AND INEXPERI-ENCED...

OH, ZHANG SONG. DO YOU HAVE A GOOD IDEA TO SUGGEST?

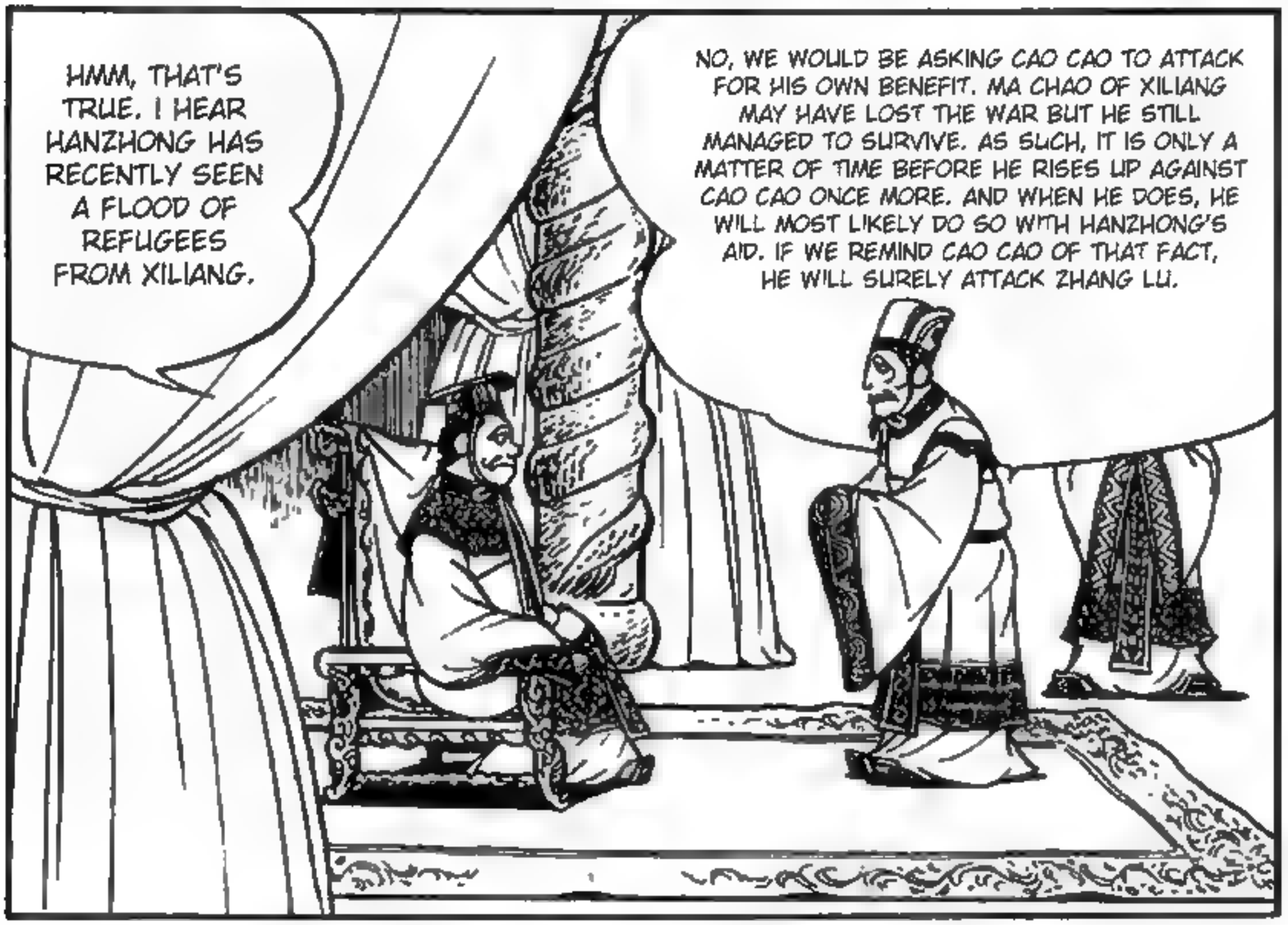
PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT, MY LORD.

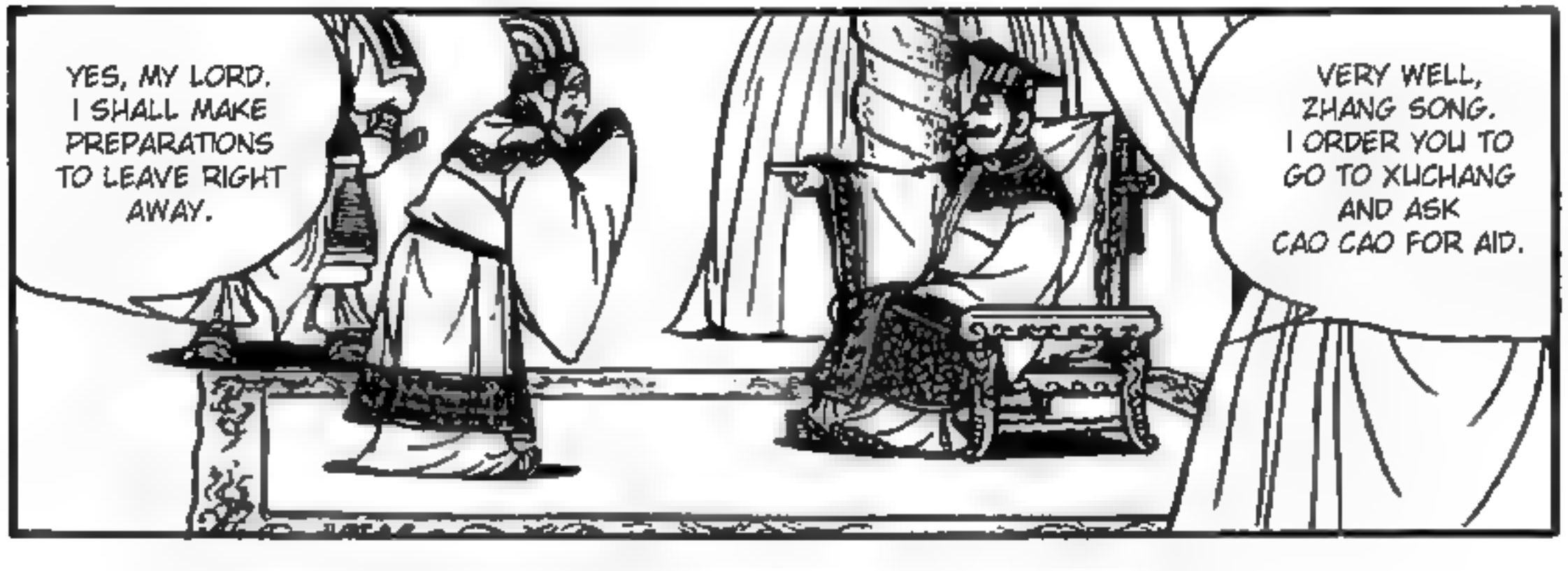
RELY ON A GREATER POWER...? WHOM DO YOU MEAN?

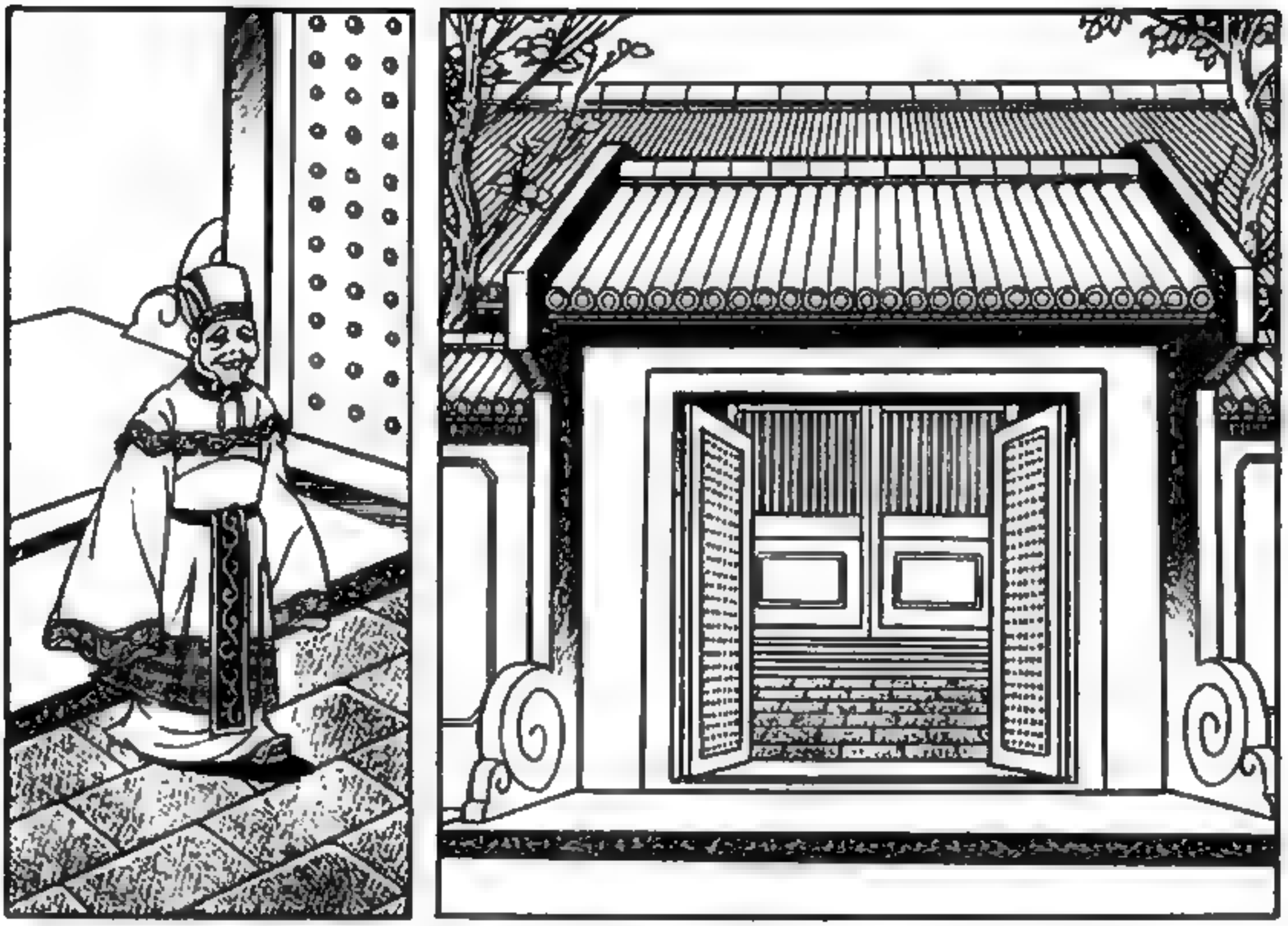
YES, I SUGGEST WE RELY ON A GREATER POWER TO ATTACK HANZHONG SO THAT ZHANG LU WILL GIVE UP HIS AMBITIONS OF SHU-CONQUEST.

BUT DO YOU REALLY THINK HE'LL ATTACK ZHANG LU ON OUR BEHALF?

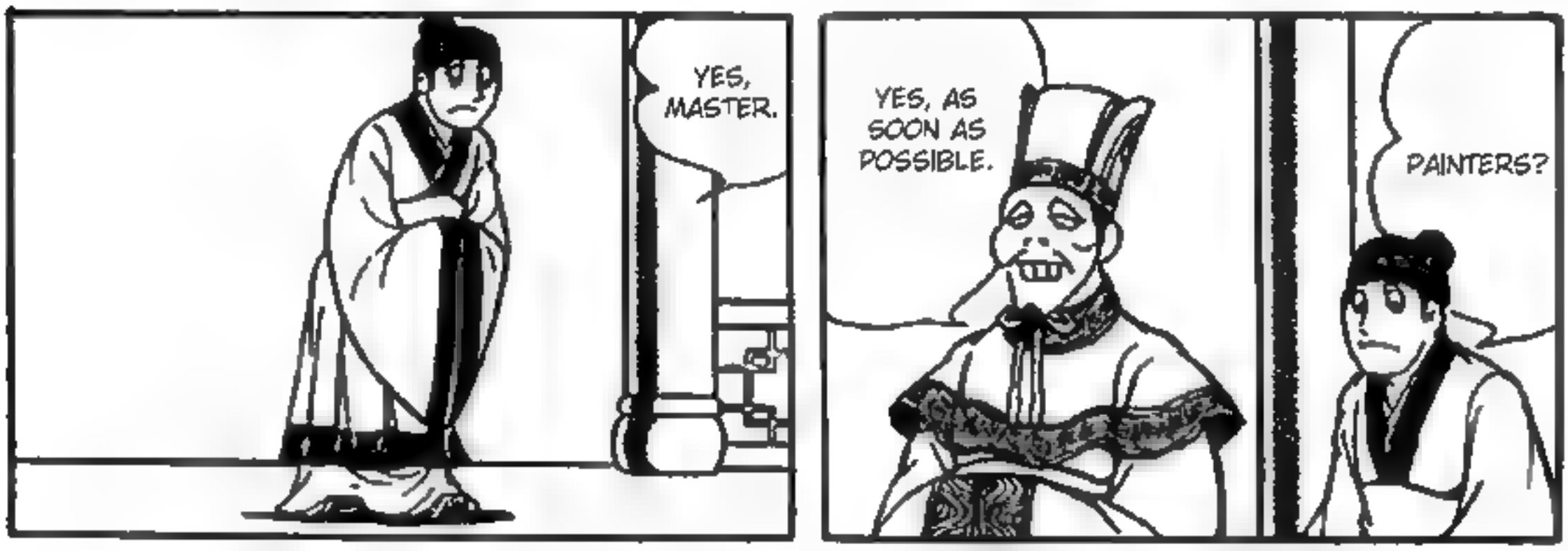
THAT WOULD BE CAO CAO OF WEI, NATURALLY.


HMM, THAT'S TRUE. I HEAR HANZHONG HAS RECENTLY SEEN A FLOOD OF REFUGEES FROM XILIANG.
NO, WE WOULD BE ASKING CAO CAO TO ATTACK FOR HIS OWN BENEFIT. MA CHAO OF XILIANG MAY HAVE LOST THE WAR BUT HE STILL MANAGED TO SURVIVE. AS SUCH, IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE RISES UP AGAINST CAO CAO ONCE MORE. AND WHEN HE DOES, HE WILL MOST LIKELY DO SO WITH HANZHONG'S AID. IF WE REMIND CAO CAO OF THAT FACT, HE WILL SURELY ATTACK ZHANG LU.

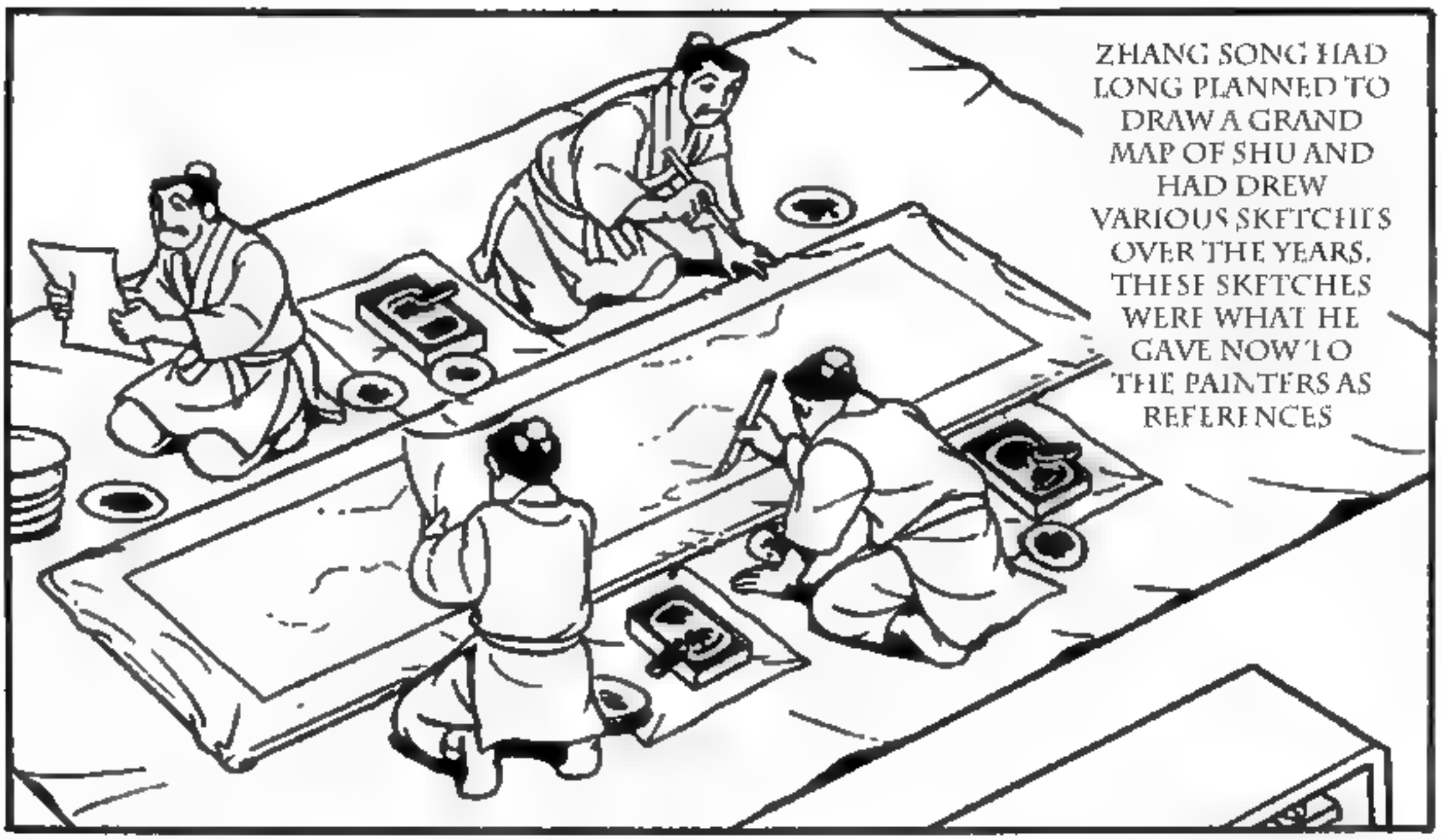

YES, MY LORD. I SHALL MAKE PREPARATIONS TO LEAVE RIGHT AWAY.
VERY WELL, ZHANG SONG. I ORDER YOU TO GO TO XUCHANG AND ASK CAO CAO FOR AID.

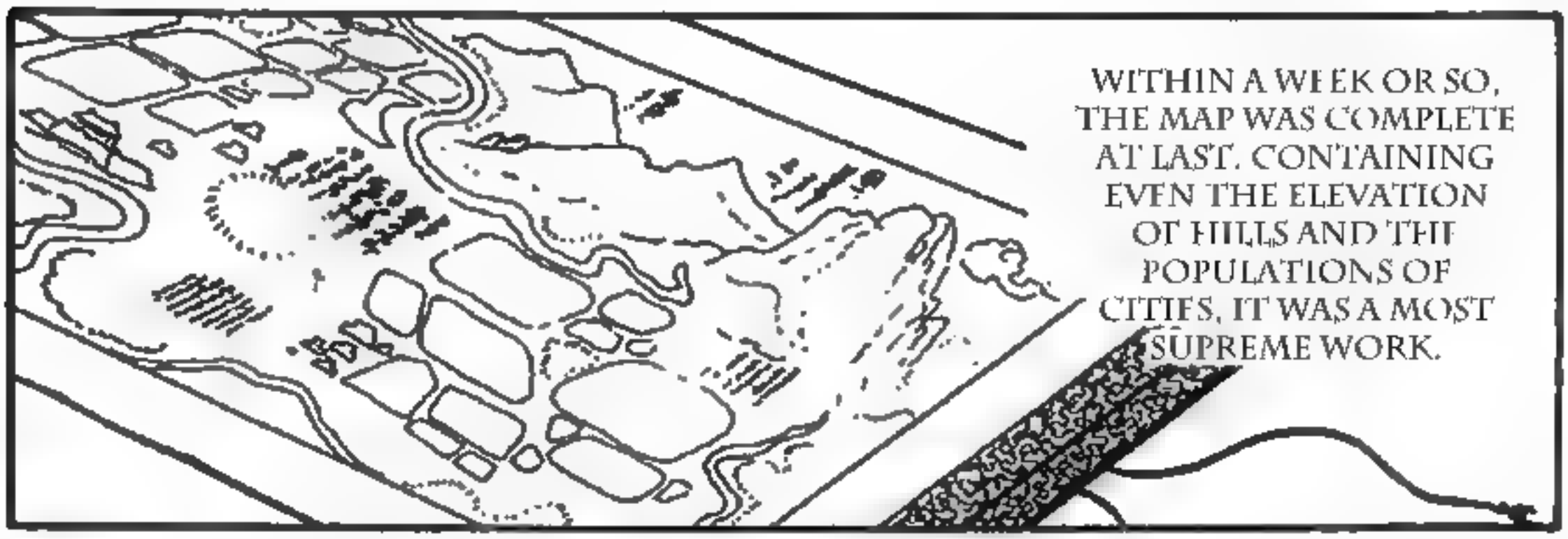


COULD YOU PLEASE CALL SOME PAINTERS OVER?
WELCOME HOME, MASTER.


YES, MASTER.
YES, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
PAINTERS?

I HAVE CALLED YOU ESTEEMED PAINTERS TODAY FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN TO DRAW A GRAND MAP OF THE 41 COUNTIES OF SHU. HERE ARE MY NOTES AND DIAGRAMS WHICH YOU CAN USE FOR REFERENCE.
THIS MAP SHOULD BE CLEAR AND ACCURATE ENOUGH TO PROVIDE AN ALMOST VICARIOUS EXPERIENCE OF SHU FOR EVEN FOREIGNERS.
PLEASE BE METICULOUS ABOUT THE EXACT LOCATIONS OF HILLS, RIVERS, VALLEYS, CITIES, VILLAGES, AND ROUTES CONVENIENT FOR BOATS AND HORSES.


ZHANG SONG HAD LONG PLANNED TO DRAW A GRAND MAP OF SHU AND HAD DREW VARIOUS SKETCHES OVER THE YEARS. THESE SKETCHES WERE WHAT HE GAVE NOW TO THE PAINTERS AS REFERENCES


WITHIN A WEEK OR SO, THE MAP WAS COMPLETE AT LAST. CONTAINING EVEN THE ELEVATION OF HILLS AND THE POPULATIONS OF CITIES, IT WAS A MOST SUPREME WORK.

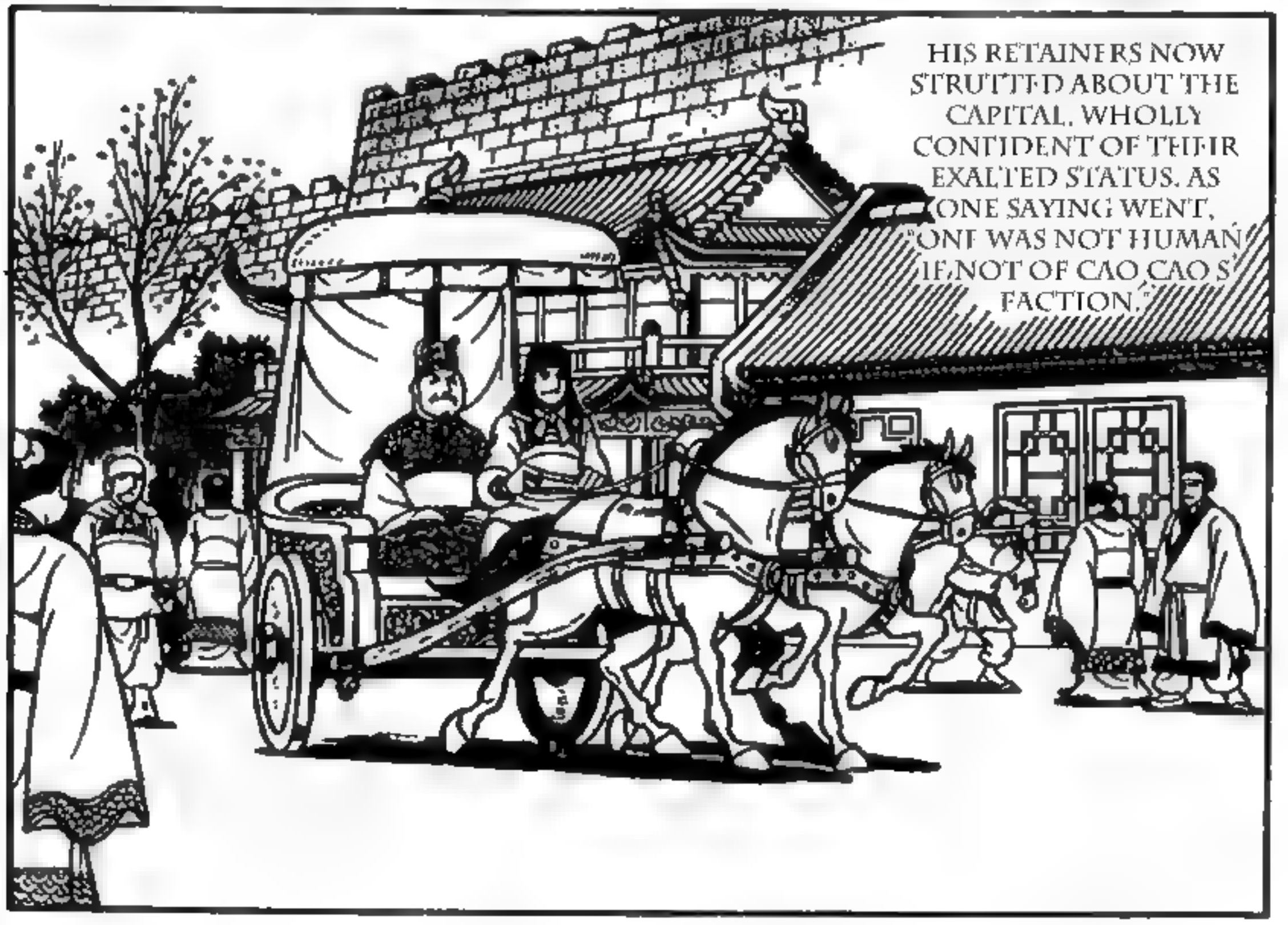
ZHANG SONG NOW HEADED FOR XUCHANG WITH THIS MAP AND VARIOUS JEWELLERY TO PRESENT TO CAO CAO.

HIS DEPARTURE WAS SOON REPORTED BY A SPY BACK TO ZHUGE LIANG.

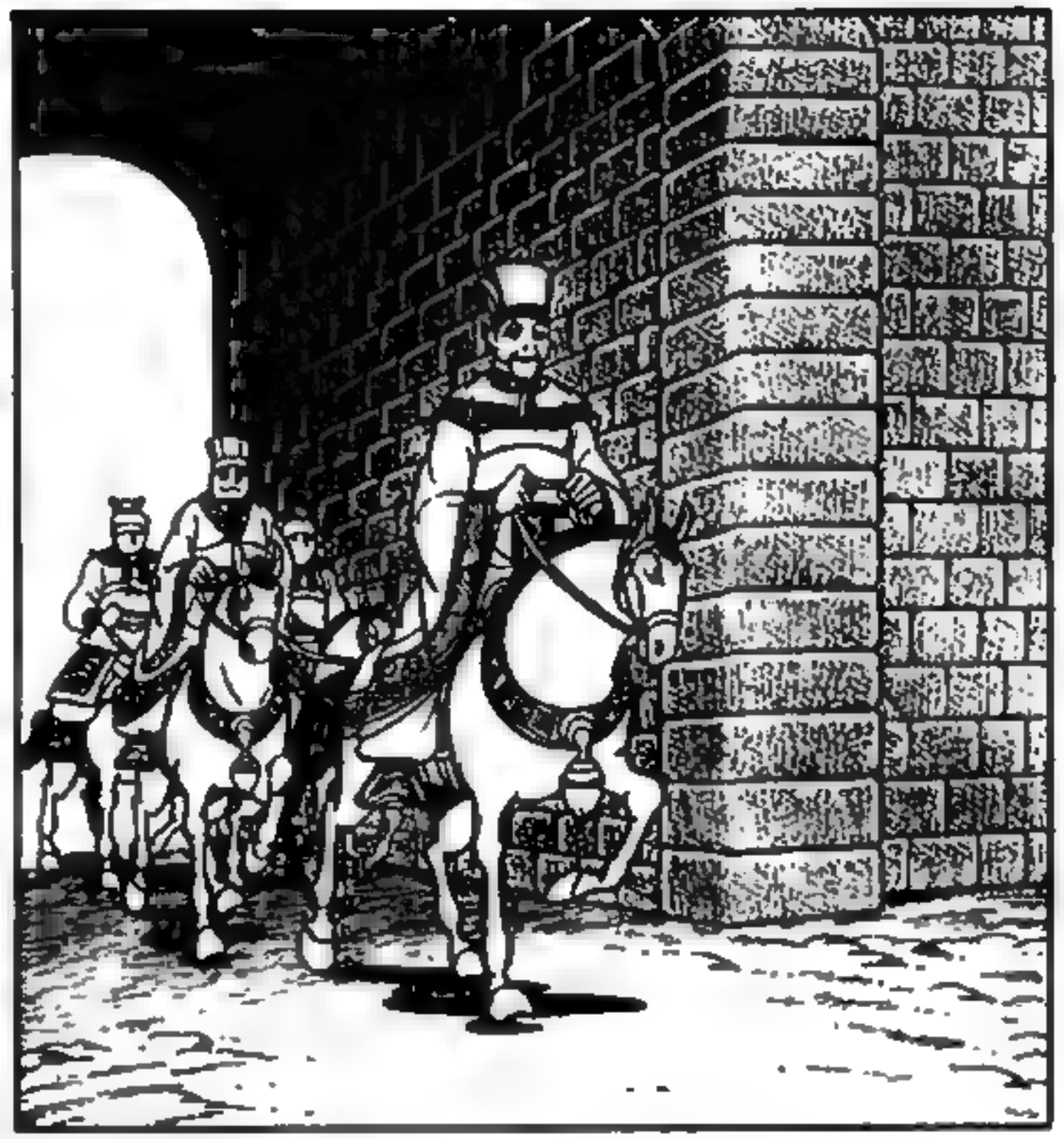
AFTER RECEIVING THIS NEWS, ZHUGE LIANG IMMEDIATELY SENT ANOTHER SPY TO XUCHANG TO FURTHER OBSERVE THE SITUATION.

NEW WRITINGS OF MENGDE

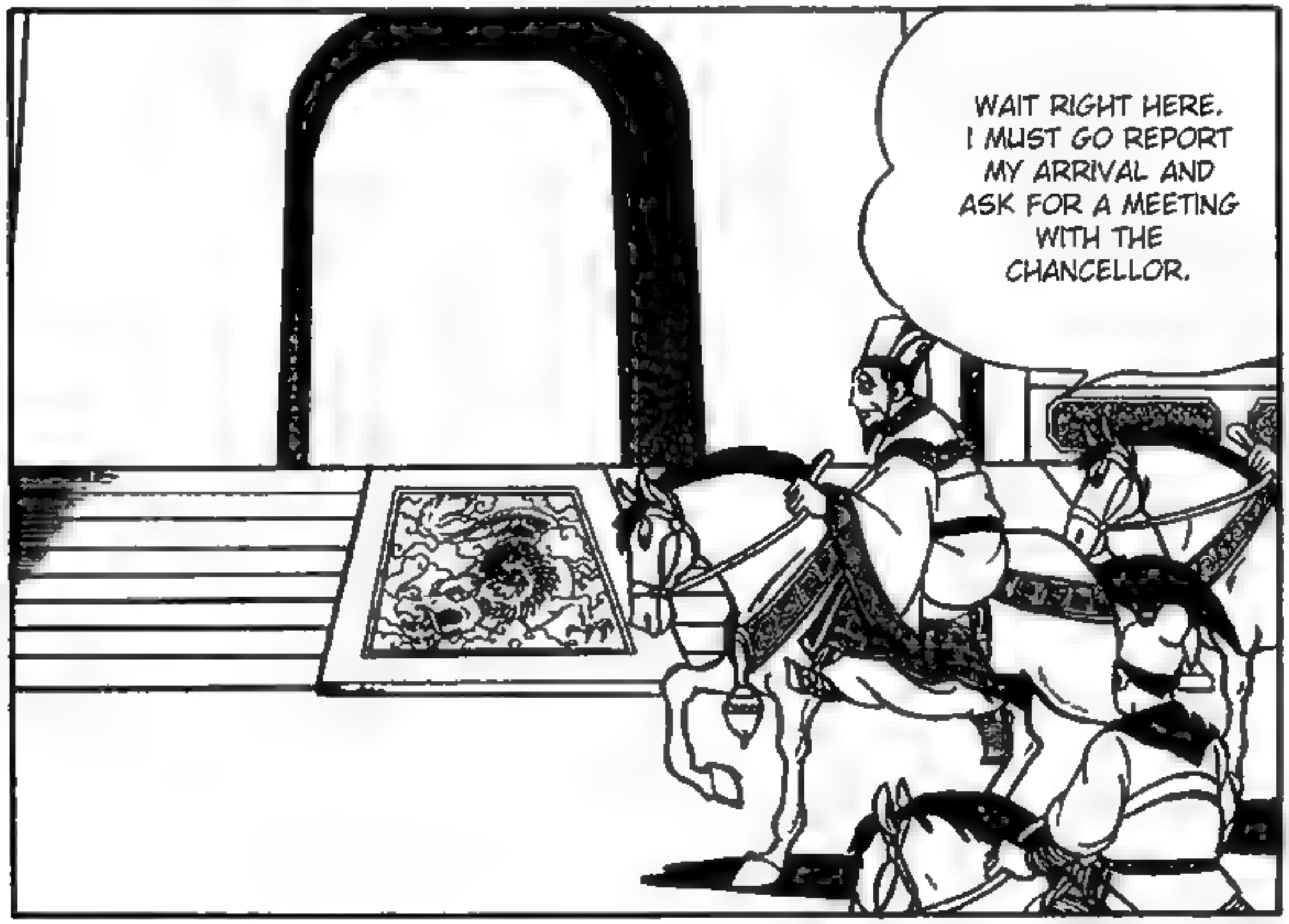
SINCE RETURNING FROM HIS TRIUMPHANT XILIANG CAMPAIGN, CAO CAO HAD BEEN HOLDING BANQUETS DAILY.


HIS RETAINERS NOW STRUTTED ABOUT THE CAPITAL, WHOLLY CONFIDENT OF THEIR EXALTED STATUS. AS ONE SAYING WENT, "ONE WAS NOT HUMAN IF NOT OF CAO CAO'S FACTION."

AS EXPECTED OF THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE REALM.



IT'S RADIANCE IS ALMOST DAZZLING ENOUGH TO BLIND SOMEONE.


WAIT RIGHT HERE. I MUST GO REPORT MY ARRIVAL AND ASK FOR A MEETING WITH THE CHANCELLOR.

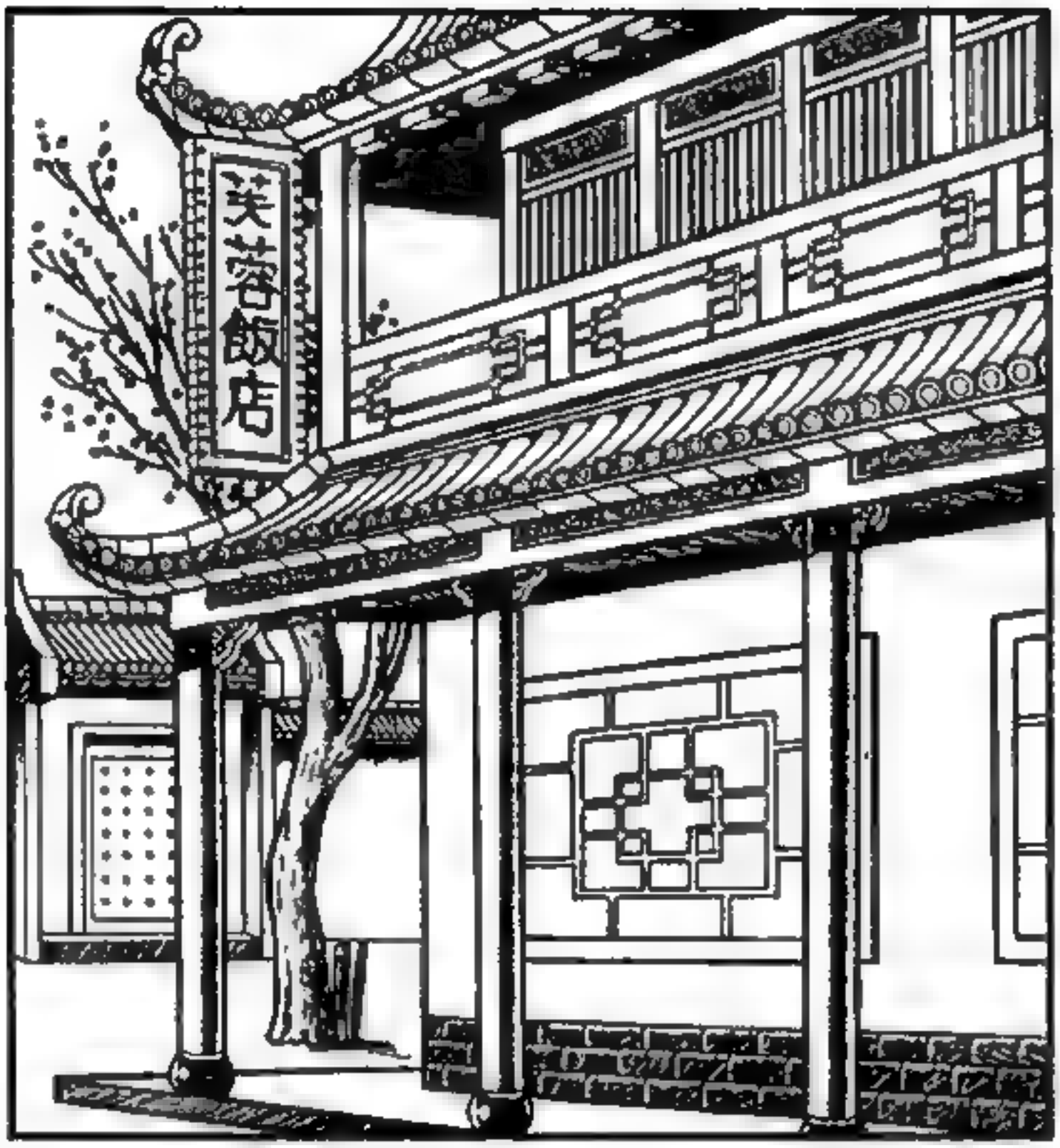
I AM AN OFFICIAL FROM SHU. I HAVE COME TO REQUEST A MEETING WITH THE CHANCELLOR.

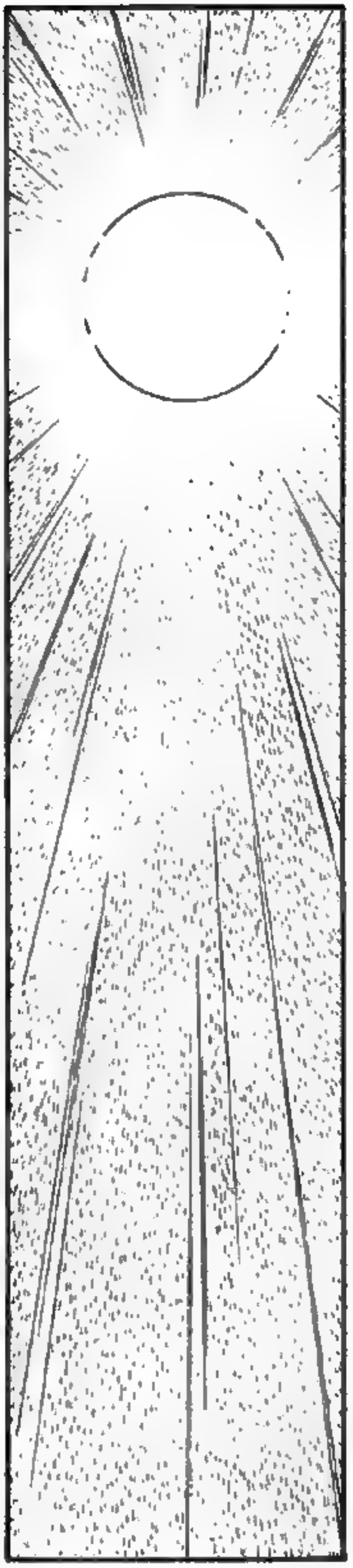
I SEE.

THE CHANCELLOR HAS TO MEET MANY PEOPLE DAILY AND IS THUS VERY BUSY. ANYONE WHO WISHES TO REQUEST A MEETING MUST WRITE HIS NAME AND RANK HERE AND WAIT.

THANK YOU.

WE WILL CONTACT YOU IN DUE TIME.


洋落飯店



SO DO I, BUT I JUST DON'T KNOW WHEN MY MEETING WILL BE...
IF YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING, I'VE NOTICED THAT YOU HAVE YET TO GO OUTSIDE DESPITE STAYING AT MY INN FOR A WHOLE WEEK NOW. YOU REALLY OUGHT TO MAKE YOUR TRIP TO THE CAPITAL MORE MEMORABLE.

HAVE YOU GIVEN THE APPOINT-MENT CLERK A LITTLE EXTRA SOMETHING?

I NEVER IMAGINED MEETING WITH THE CHANCELLOR WAS SO DIFFICULT.

A LITTLE BRIBE CAN SHORTEN THAT WAIT, YOU KNOW.

WELL, OF COURSE! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE ON A WAITING LIST TO SEE THE CHANCELLOR?

WHAT? YOU MEAN I SHOULD BRIBE HIM?

HM...

RIGHT AWAY, SIR.

FINE, THEN. WOULD YOU BE SO KIND ENOUGH AS TO GIVE THIS TO THAT CLERK?

A FEW DAYS LATER...

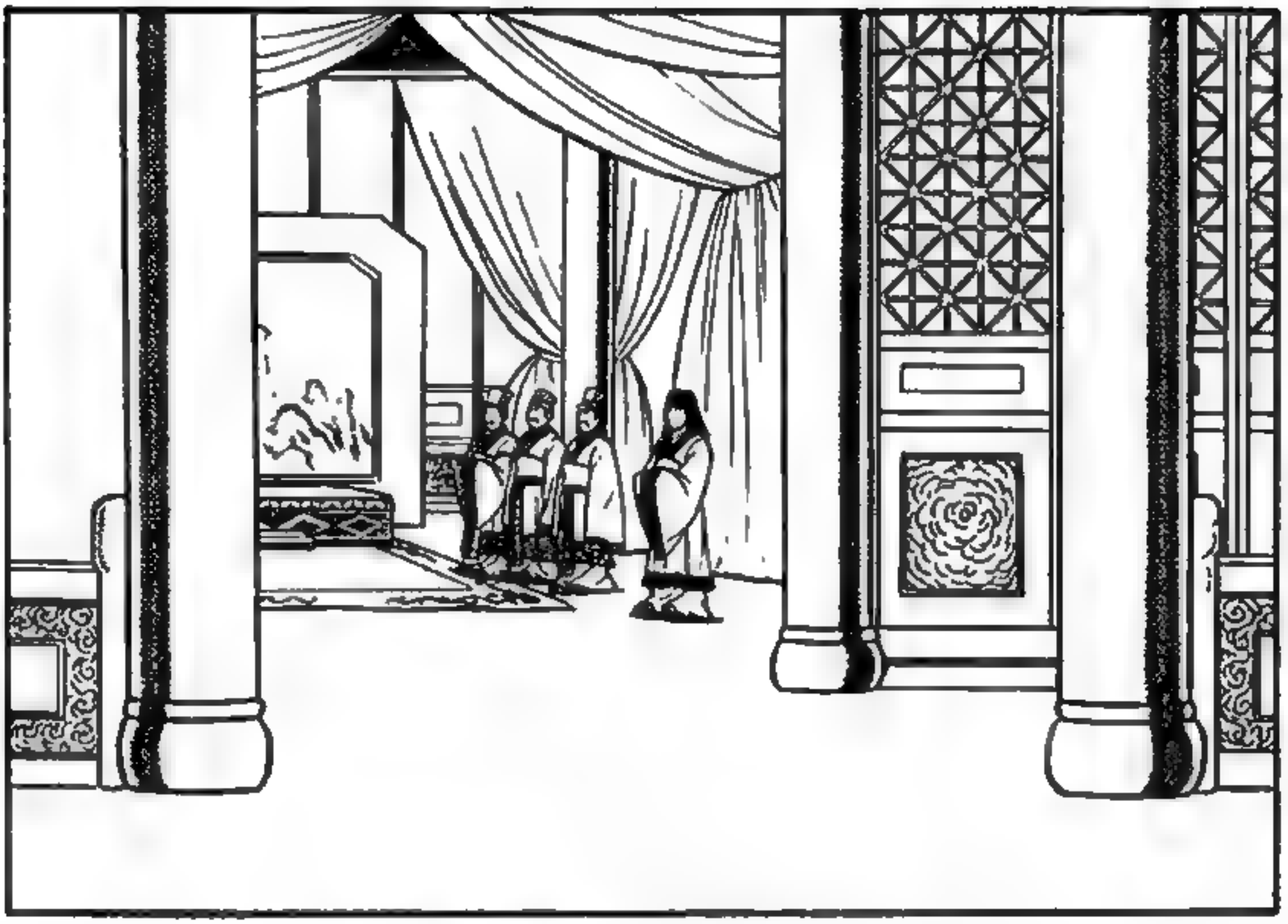
HERE.

GOOD, I'M TO SEE THE CHANCELLOR TOMORROW.

SIR! YOU'VE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE RECEPTIONIST!

YES, BUT I'M NOT SURE IF ONE SHOULD BE HAPPY ABOUT SUCH A THING...

WHAT DID I SAY? A LITTLE BRIBE CAN GO A LONG WAY HERE IN THE CAPITAL. AREN'T YOU HAPPY YOU LISTENED TO ME?



YES, SIR. I AM CALLED ZHANG SONG.
SO YOU'VE COME ALL THE WAY FROM SHU?

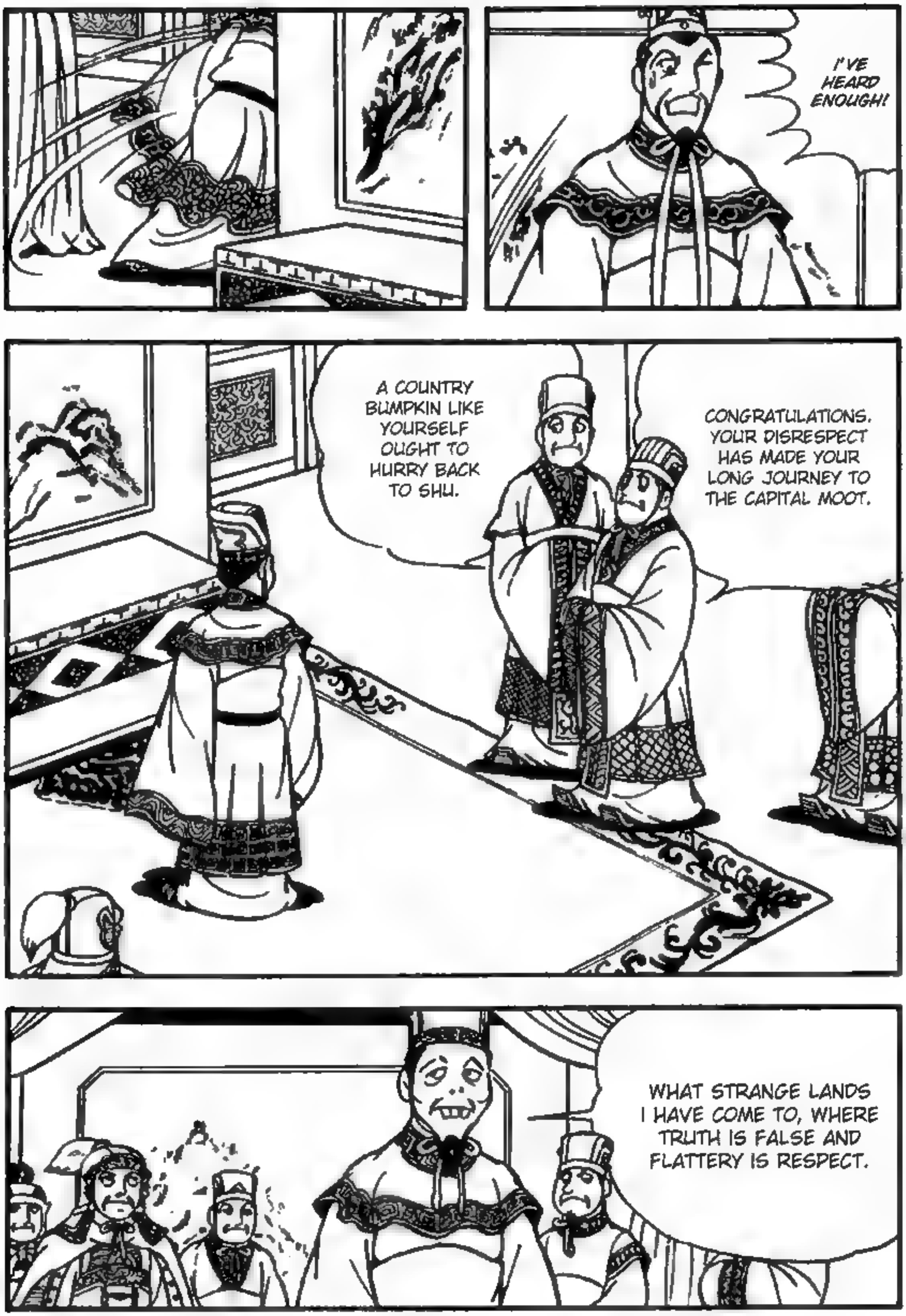
I'M AFRAID THE ROADS FROM SHU TO THE CAPITAL ARE TOO FRAUGHT WITH BANDITS TO MAKE THE YEARLY SENDING OF TRIBUTE FEASIBLE.

WHY IS IT THAT SHU HAS NOT SENT ITS YEARLY TRIBUTE TO THE IMPERIAL COURT FOR SOME TIME NOW?

ARE YOU INSINUATING THAT MY INFLUENCE HAS ALREADY DECLINED SO MUCH THAT BANDITS ARE ROMAING ONCE MORE?

IT HAS BEEN AGES SINCE I EXTERMINATED BANDITS AND RESTORED PEACE TO THE REALM.

I'M AFRAID PEACE AND STABILITY ARE FAR FROM RESTORED. THERE IS STILL ZHANG LU IN HANZHONG, LIU BEI IN JINGZHOU, AND SUN JIAN IN JIANGNAN. AND ASIDE FROM THESE WARLORDS, BANDITS CLAIM THEIR OWN TERRITORIES FAR OFF IN THE REMOTE COUNTRYSIDE.


I'VE HEARD ENOUGH!
A COUNTRY BUMPKIN LIKE YOURSELF OUGHT TO HURRY BACK TO SHU.
CONGRATULATIONS. YOUR DISRESPECT HAS MADE YOUR LONG JOURNEY TO THE CAPITAL MOOT.
WHAT STRANGE LANDS I HAVE COME TO, WHERE TRUTH IS FALSE AND FLATTERY IS RESPECT.

YOUR WORDS SEEM TO CARRY A PALPABLE DISDAIN FOR US NORTHERNERS.

NO, BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT SUCH BLATANTLY FALSE FLATTERY DOES NOT FLY IN SHU.

HOLD JUST A MOMENT! ARE YOU CALLING US MEN OF WEI A PACK OF LIARS!?

BUT LET'S SEE IF YOUR CONDECENSION FOR US CAN BE JUSTIFIED OR NOT.

COME THIS WAY.

FEEL FREE TO TALK OPENLY HERE.

I AM ZHANG SONG, A MINOR SUPERNUMARY CHARIOTEER.*

I AM YANG XIU, SECRETARY OF FINANCES FOR THE CHANCELLOR.

*AIDE TO GOVERNOR

IT MUST HAVE BEEN QUITE A ROUGH JOURNEY TO THE CAPITAL.

I SEE. PLEASE TELL ME A LITTLE MORE ABOUT SHU.

IF OUR LORD COMMANDS US, THE MEN OF SHU ARE NOT AFRAID TO WALK THROUGH FIRE AND WATER.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOUR PEOPLE.

WITH 4 GREAT RIVERS FERTILIZING ITS LAND, OUR HARVEST IS BOUNTIFUL. OUR PEOPLE LIVE CONTENT AND PEACEFULLY.

THE NAME SHU DERIVES FROM THE ANCIENT STATE THAT EXISTED DURING THE WARRING STATES PERIOD. STEEP MOUNTAINS ENCLOSE ITS BORDERS AND ITS AREA IS OVER 30,000 LI. IT WOULD TAKE A MAN 208 DAYS TO TRAVEL AROUND IT ON FOOT.

WE COUNT MEN WHO EXHIBIT EXEMPLARLY BRAVERY, LOYALTY, AND WITS BY THE HUNDREDS.

MEANWHILE, MEN OF MY LOWLY CALIBRE ARE AS COMMON AS THE GRAINS OF RICE.

YOU SAY THAT BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT AWARE OF THE CHANCELLOR'S GREATNESS.

IF I AM CORRECTLY INFORMED, YOUR FAMILY IS MOST ESTEEMED, BOASTING MANY GENERATIONS OF OFFICE-HOLDERS AND 6 CHANCELLORS. MIGHT I INQUIRE WHY A MAN OF YOUR STANDING IS A MERE SECRETARY TO THE CHANCELLOR INSTEAD OF DIRECTLY SERVING THE EMPEROR?

HOW EXACTLY IS HE GREAT THEN, MIGHT I ASK?

FROM WHAT I HEAR, HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE CLASSICS OR MILITARY TREATISES IS MEDIOCRE AT BEST. I DARESAY HE CAN ONLY BE CALLED GREAT IN HIS LUST FOR POWER.

OH REALLY NOW?

AS OUTRAGEOUS AS YOUR CLAIMS ARE, I EXCUSE YOU ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE MEN OF SHU ARE FAR TOO SHUT OFF FROM THE REST OF THE REALM.

YES. WAIT RIGHT HERE WHILE I BRING YOU UNDENIABLE PROOF OF THE CHANCELLOR'S GREATNESS.

IT APPEARS TO BE A MILITARY TREATISE.

I SUGGEST YOU READ THIS.

WHO WROTE THIS BOOK?

HMM...

YES. IT IS TITLED "THE NEW WRITINGS OF MENGDE" AND IS DIVIDED INTO 13 CHAPTERS, MIRRORING THE 13 CHAPTERS OF SUN TZU'S ART OF WAR.

THE CHANCELLOR?

THIS IS A MILITARY TREATISE THE CHANCELLOR WROTE TO ENLIGHTEN FUTURE GENERATIONS.

HEE HEE HEE

CAN YOU STILL DENY HIS GREATNESS AFTER READING THIS, I WONDER?

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

AHAHAHA!

WHAT IS SO HUMOROUS!

SETTING ASIDE YOUR DISRESPECT FOR THE CHANCELLOR, YOU DARE CLAIM THAT EVEN LITTLE CHILDREN CAN COMPREHEND SUCH A DIFFICULT WORK?

EVEN LITTLE CHILDREN IN SHU KNOW THIS BOOK BY HEART! IT WAS WRITTEN DURING THE WARRING STATES ERA BY SOME MAN WHOSE NAME HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN BY TIME. IT APPEARS THE CHANCELLOR HAS COPIED IT WORD FOR WORD AND IS NOW CALLING IT HIS "NEW WRITINGS."

OH, SO YOU THINK I'M LYING, DO YOU?

I ADVISE YOU TO REFRAIN FROM MAKING SUCH RIDICULOUS CLAIMS IF YOU EVER WANT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY.

YOU ASK ME TO PROVE MYSELF BY DOING SOMETHING EVEN CHILDREN CAN DO?

HOW COULD I NOT? OR ARE YOU WILLING TO RECITE IT WORD BY WORD AND PROVE YOUR BOASTS?

AND THUS ZHANG SONG PROCEEDED TO RECITE THE "NEW WRITINGS OF MENGDE" WORD FOR WORD FROM MEMORY WITHOUT A SINGLE MISTAKE.

FORGIVE ME FOR DOUBTING YOU, SIR! I HAVE NOT SHOWN YOU THE PROPER RESPECT BEFITTING YOUR TALENTS.

I WILL PUT IN A GOOD WORD FOR YOU TO THE CHANCELLOR AND ASK HIM TO MEET WITH YOU ONE MORE TIME.

PLEASE WAIT JUST A MOMENT.

I SHALL TAKE MY LEAVE THEN.

I PROMISE IT.

AH, I WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL IF YOU DID.

CHANCELLOR, WHY DID YOU LEAVE EARLIER WITHOUT REPLYING TO ZHANG SONG?

TO JUDGE SOMEONE ON LOOKS ALONE WILL CAUSE SIR TO MISTAKE FOOLS FOR GENIUSES AND VICE-VERSA.

I WAS IN NO MOOD TO CHAT AFTER SEEING HIS UNSIGHTLY ATTIRE AND DISRESPECT-FUL ATTITUDE.

I DO BELIEVE SO, CHANCELLOR. I SHOWED HIM THE NEW WRITINGS OF MENGDE AND HE COULD RECITE IT PERFECTLY AFTER TAKING A QUICK GLANCE AT IT.

ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT THAT COUNTRY BUMPKIN IS A GENIUS?

HMPH, THAT ONLY PROVES MY THOUGHTS ARE IN LINE WITH THAT OF ESTEEMED ANCIENTS.

HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT THE BOOK WAS ACTUALLY WRITTEN BY SOME MAN DURING THE WARRING STATES ERA AND THAT EVEN LITTLE CHILDREN IN SHU KNOW IT BY HEART.

YES, SIR.

BRING ME THAT BOOK RIGHT NOW.

I BEG YOUR PARDON?

NOW BURN IT.

Y-YES, SIR.

I SAID BURN IT!

WHY DON'T YOU SHOW HIM THE MIGHT AND SPLENDOUR OF THE IMPERIAL COURT THEN?

HMM...

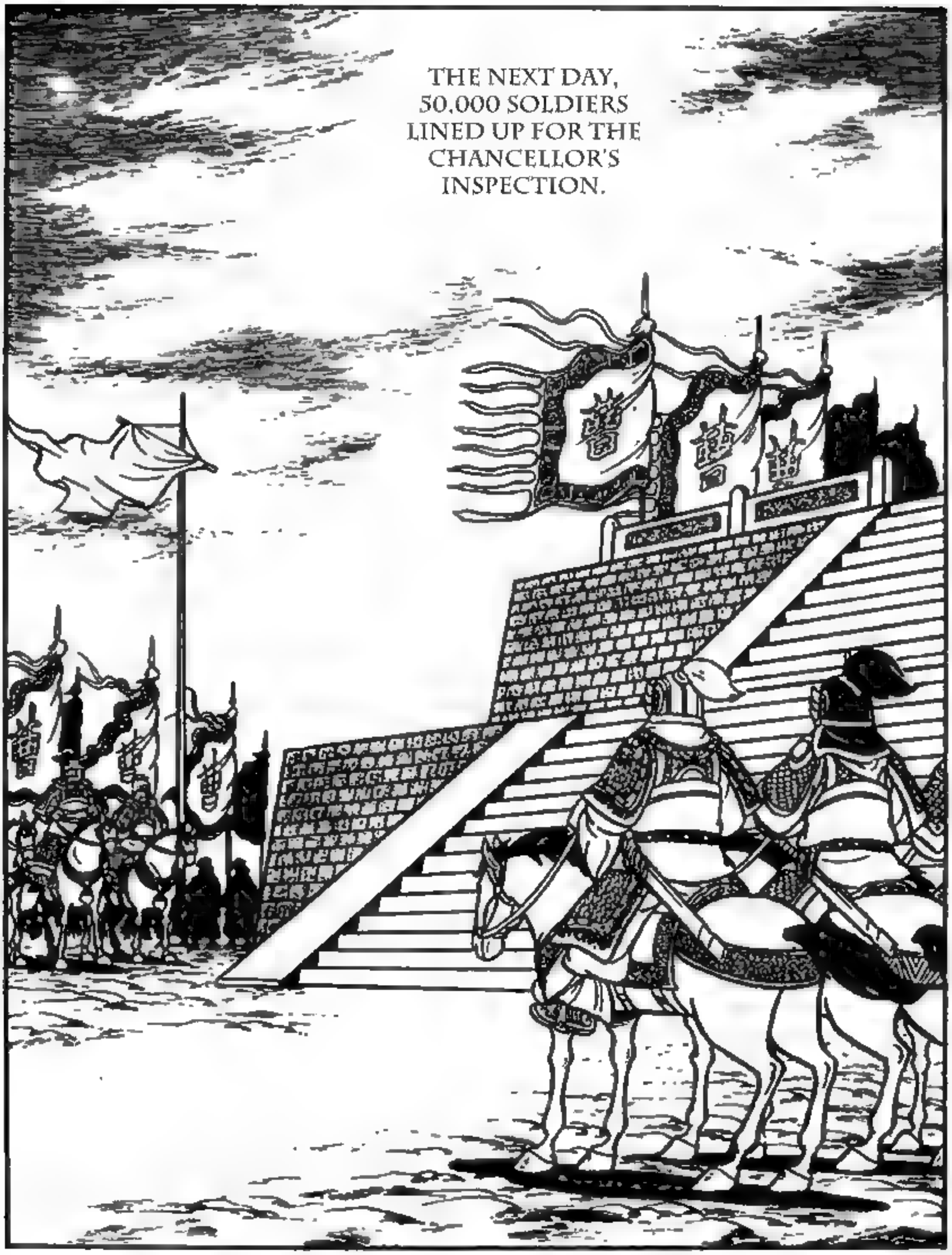
HOW DARE A COUNTRY BUMPKIN LOOK DOWN ON ME...

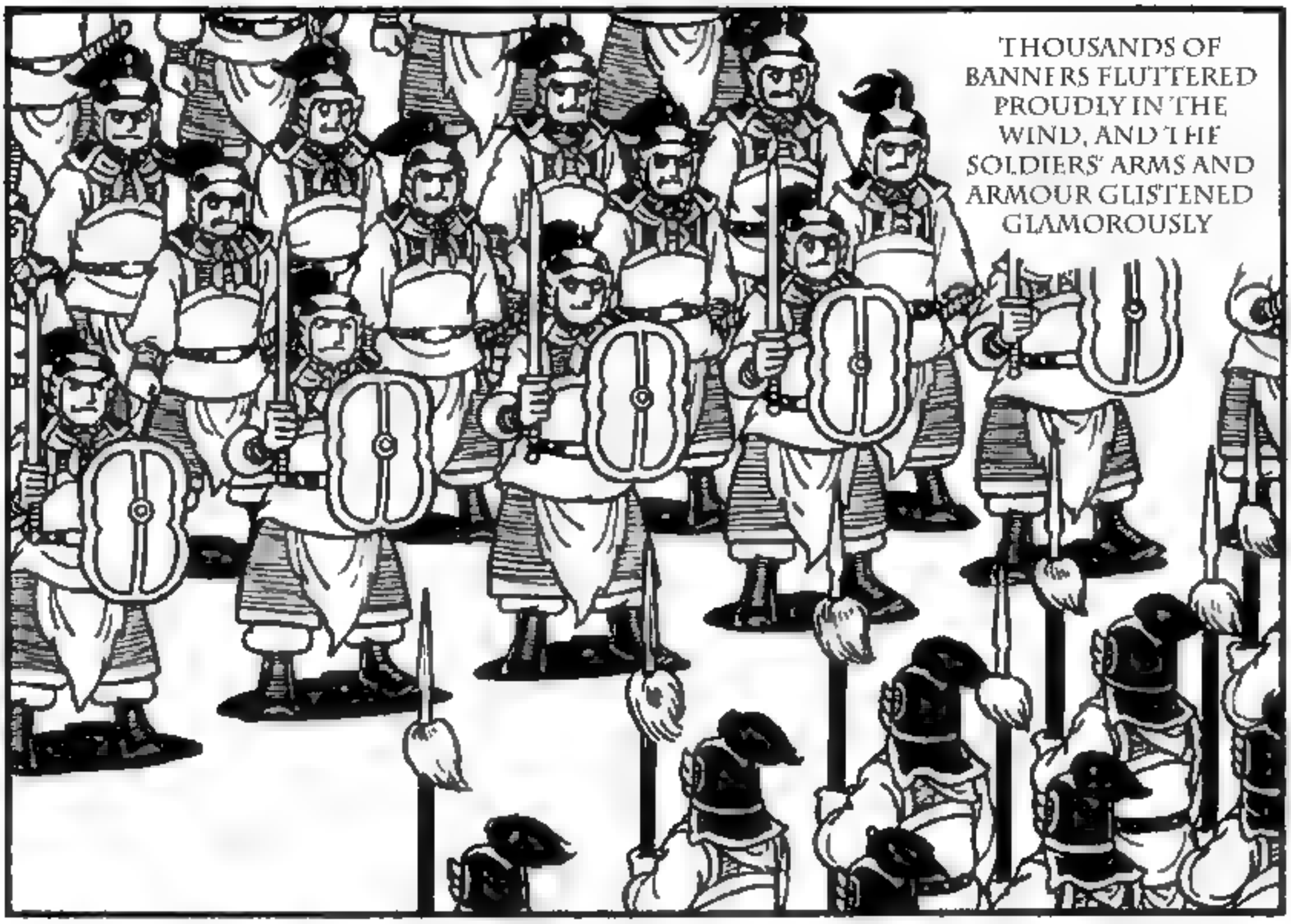
AFTER HE SEES THE MIGHT OF MY ARMY, I SHALL TELL HIM I WILL SOON COME AFTER HIS WESTLANDS ONCE I DEAL WITH THE SOUTHLANDS.

ALRIGHT THEN. I'LL BE REVIEWING THE TROOPS IN THE WESTERN PARADE GROUND TOMORROW AND I WANT YOU TO BRING HIM WITH YOU.

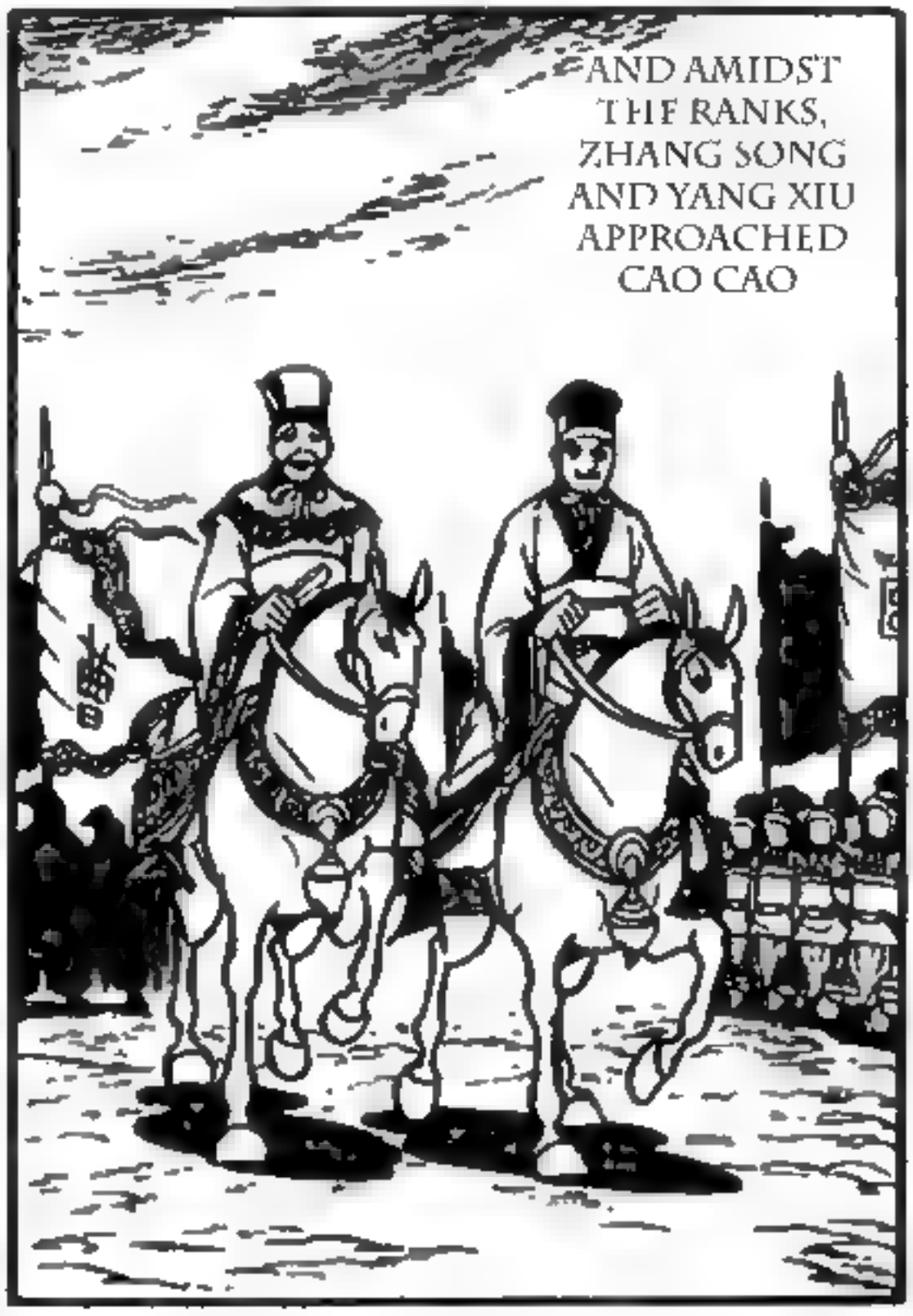
AS YOU WISH, SIR.

100 BEATINGS




THOUSANDS OF BANNERS FLUTTERED PROUDLY IN THE WIND, AND THE SOLDIERS' ARMS AND ARMOUR GLISTENED GLAMOROUSLY

HOW GOOD OF YOU TO JOIN ME, ZHANG SONG. PLEASE COME ON UP.


AND AMIDST THE RANKS, ZHANG SONG AND YANG XIU APPROACHED CAO CAO

WHAT DO YOU THINK? DOES SHU ALSO HAVE SUCH AN IMPRES-SIVE ARMY?

WHAT!?

OF COURSE NOT, CHANCELLOR. OUR STATE GOVERNS WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR SO MANY SOLDIERS AND WARHORSES.

THEN WHAT WOULD SHU DO IF MY ELITE FORCES MARCHED INTO ITS LAND, BENT ON CONQUEST!?

EXACTLY, SIR.

YOU SAY THAT SHU NEEDS NO ARMY FOR ITS RULE IS JUST!?

WHAT!?

ELITE AS THEY ARE, THEY ARE FAR FROM BEING INVINCIBLE.

AT HUARONG VALLEY, YOU BEGGED GUAN YU FOR YOUR LIFE, WHILE AT TONG PASS, YOU THREW AWAY YOUR RED CAPE TO HIDE FROM MA CHAO.

YOUR ELITE FORCES WERE ROUTED BY LU BU AT POYANG, SCATTERED BY ZHANG XIU AT WANCHENG, AND DECIMATED BY ZHOU YU AT RED CLIFFS.

WHY YOU...

ELITE ARMIES, NO MATTER WHOSE, ARE FAR FROM INVINCIBLE. THEREFORE, EVEN IF THE CHANCELLOR ATTEMPTED TO INVADE SHU, I DOUBT YOUR SUCCESS WHEN FACING SHU'S HARSH TERRAIN.

DID YOU COME ALL THE WAY FROM SHU JUST TO SLING INSULTS!?

OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

DESPITE HIS GRAVE INSULTS, IT WOULD BE FAR TOO PITIFUL TO EXTINGUISH AN INTELLECT AS RARE AS HE.

CHANCELLOR, PLEASE CALM DOWN.

I CARE NOT! AS LONG AS I AM THE CHANCELLOR, THIS MAN'S HEAD AND BODY SHALL NOT RETURN TO SHU IN ONE PIECE!

I BEG MY CHANCELLOR TO RECONSIDER. ZHANG SONG HAS CROSSED TREACHEROUS MOUNTAINS AND THOUSANDS OF LI TO OFFER TRIBUTE TO THE IMPERIAL COURT. WHAT WOULD THE PEOPLE THINK OF SIR IF THEY HEAR YOU EXECUTED HIM IN SPITE OF THAT?

EVEN IF YOU TELL THE PEOPLE WHAT ZHANG SONG DID, I FEAR NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE A MERE TRIBUTE-BEARER COULD DARE TO SO GRAVELY INSULT THE CHANCELLOR.

EVEN SO, I ABSOLUTELY CANNOT ALLOW HIM TO REMAIN ENTIRELY UNPUNISHED...

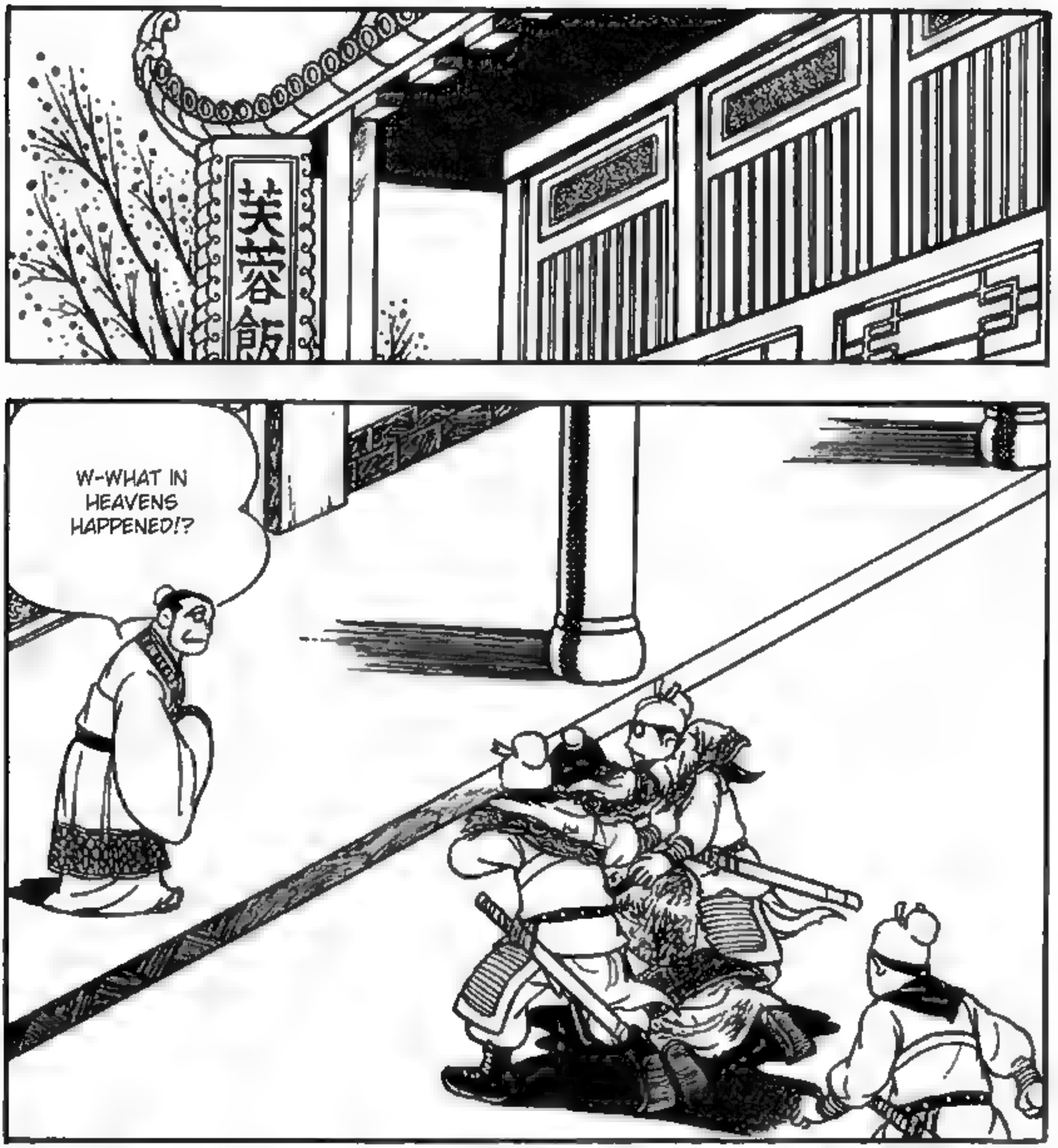
MNN...

AND SO, THE DETAILS SURROUNDING HIS EXECUTION WOULD NATURALLY CALL FORTH WILD RUMOURS, WHICH WOULD ONLY DAMAGE YOUR PRESTIGE.

I SENTENCE ZHANG SONG TO 100 BEATINGS!

LET'S GO, YOU IMPUDENT SCUM!

YOU SHOULD CONSIDER IT A BLESSING THAT THE CHANCELLOR DECIDED TO SPARE YOUR LIFE.


芙蓉飯
W-WHAT IN HEAVENS HAPPENED!?

R-RIGHT.
PLEASE CALL A DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.

I CAME HERE AS THE MESSENGER OF A LEGITIMATE STATE. DESPITE THAT, THEY MADE ME WAIT FOR DAYS ON END JUST BECAUSE I DID NOT BRIBE THE OFFICIAL. AND WHEN I FINALLY MANAGED TO MEET THE CHANCELLOR, THE VERY FIRST THING HE DID WAS RUDELY INQUIRE WHY SHU HAD NOT PAID ITS YEARLY TRIBUTE RECENTLY. HAVING NEVER BEEN SO INSULTED IN MY LIFE, I THOUGHT I MIGHT RETURN THE FAVOUR BUT...

WHAT HAPPENED!? WHO DID THIS TO YOU, ZHANG SONG?

WHERE IS THE PATIENT?

...THIS WAS CAO CAO'S REPLY.

THIS WILL HURT BUT PLEASE BEAR THROUGH IT.

MNN, THIS IS VERY GRAVE INDEED.

TAKE PLENTY OF REST FOR THE NEXT 2-3 DAYS, AND IT SHOULD BE SAFE ENOUGH FOR YOU TO START WALKING AGAIN.

NGHHH...

TAKE CARE THEN.

WHAT TO DO NOW...?
LIU ZHANG UNFORTUNATELY LACKS THE ABILITY TO DEFEND SHU. AND SO I CAME HERE TO THE CAPITAL WITH THE INTENTION OF HANDING SHU OVER TO CAO CAO'S CARE IN EXCHANGE FOR MILITARY PROTECTION BUT...

THAT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE...

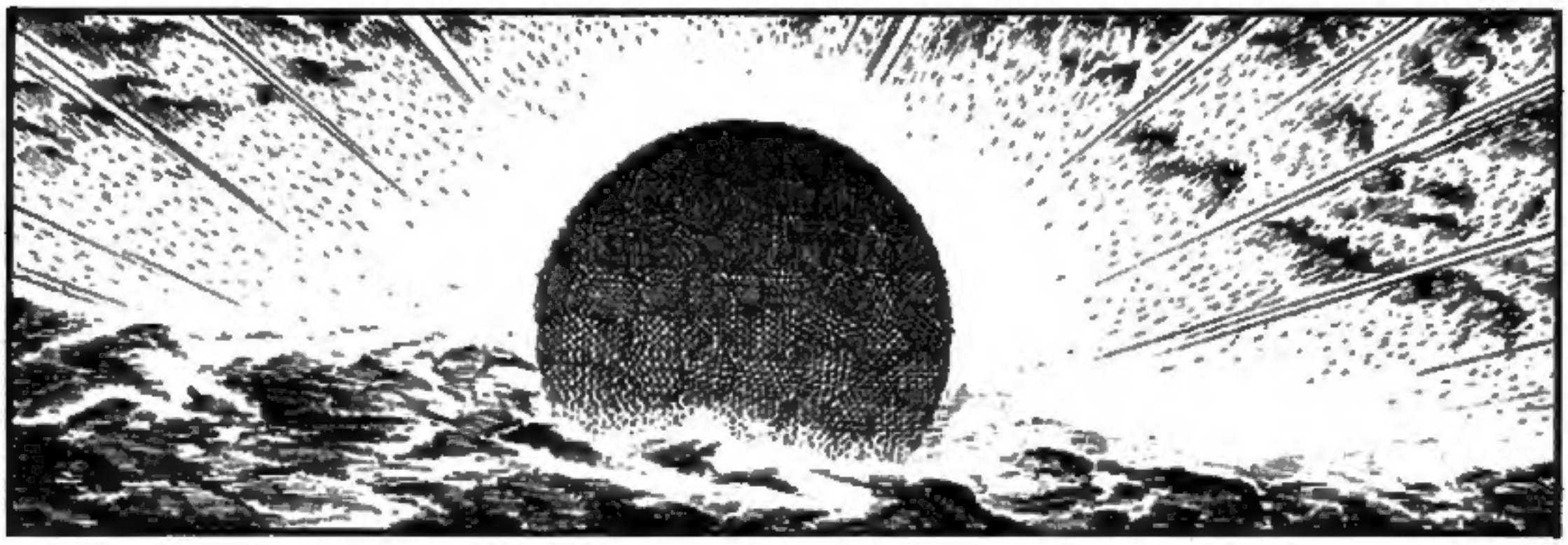
I ASSURED MY LORD SO CONFIDENTLY WHEN I LEFT THAT ALL WOULD GO WELL...
IF I RETURNED EMPTY-HANDED, I'D BECOME THE LAUGHING STOCK OF SHU.

I'VE HEARD RUMOURS THAT LIU BEI OF JINGZHOU WAS A KIND AND VIRTUOUS RULER. PERHAPS I SHOULD SEE FOR MYSELF WHAT KIND OF MAN HE REALLY IS...

HOLD ON.

YES, THAT'S WHAT I'LL DO.

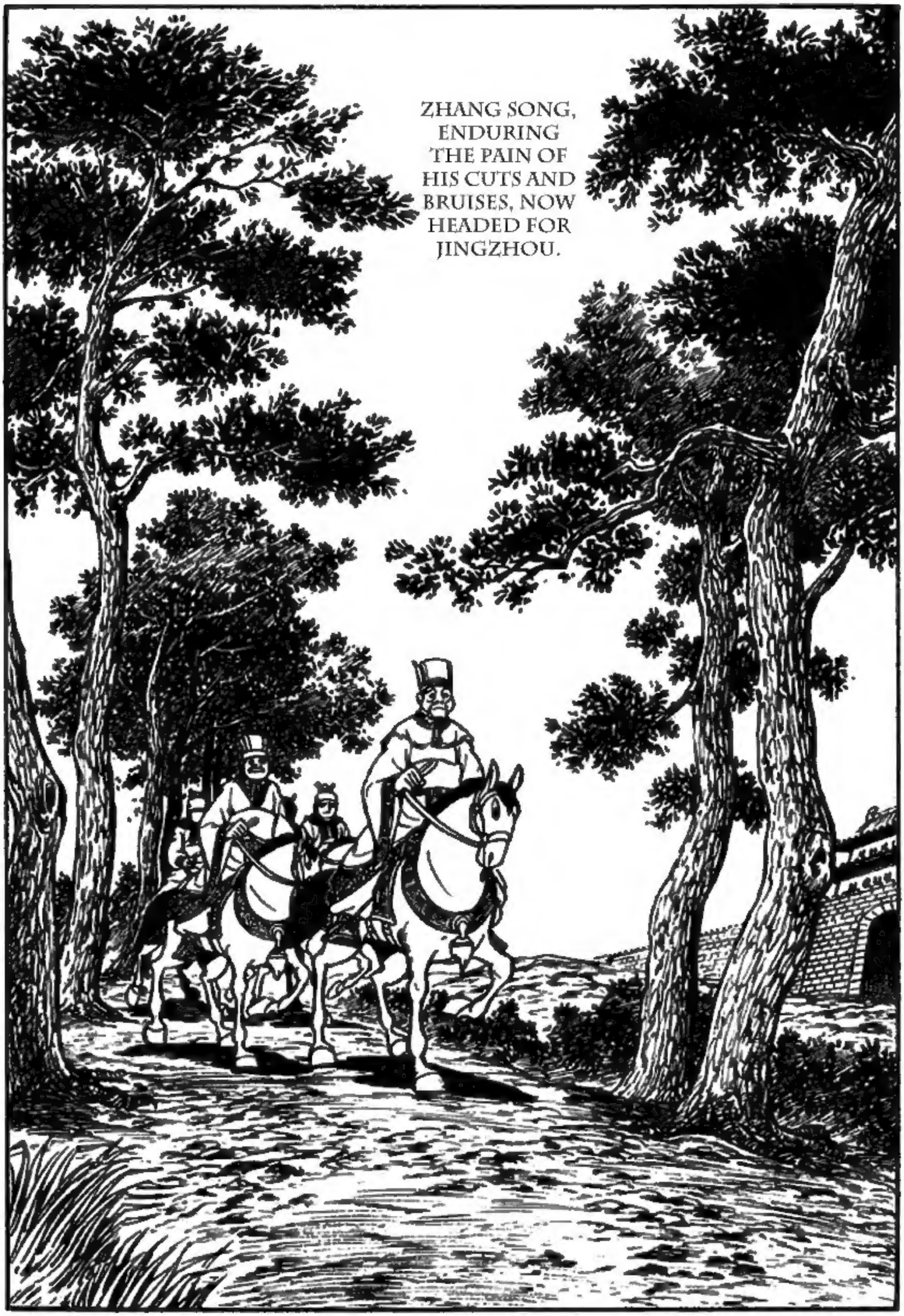
IN ANY CASE, I'M JUST THANKFUL THAT I DID NOT HAND OVER THE MAP OF SHU'S 41 COUNTIES TO CAO CAO.



BUT THE DOCTOR ADVISED 2-3 FULL DAYS OF REST, SIR.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. MORE IMPORTANTLY, I DO NOT WISH TO STAY HERE ANY LONGER.

PARDON?
LET US BE OFF THEN!



TRANSLATED BY HOX

eBOOKで
快適読書生活

http://www.ebookjapan.jp

電子書籍版

三国志

32

横山 光輝

© 光プロダクション／潮出版社

Original 潮出版社 希望コミックス

Digital Distributor
eBOOK Initiative Japan Co.,Ltd.
〒101-0062　東京都千代田区神田駿河台 2-9-18
http://www.ebookjapan.jp